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Hannah S. Pike.

from

John Wentworth Sanborn.

1876.



LEGENDS, CUSTOMS

AND

SOCIAL LIFE

OF THE

SENECA INDIANS,

OF

WESTERN NEW YORK,

BY

JOHN WENTWORTH SANBORN,

(*"O-yo-ga-weh,"*)

(CLEAR SKY.)

1878.

**LOAN STACK**

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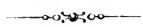
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DEDICATION.



TO

JUDGE WILLIAM WOODBURY,

OF THE CATTARAUGUS BAR,

a companion in various fishing and hunting tramps, among the Allegheny Mountains and over the Cattaraugus hills, for trout and partridge, as a token of high regard for his literary taste and attainments, and appreciation of his distinguished friendship, this little book of Indian Life and Legends is affectionately dedicated, by the author,  
"O-YO-GA-WEH."



## INTRODUCTION

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That picturesque region—watered by the swiftly flowing Cattaraugus, and broken by precipitous hills; for hundreds of years the favorite hunting and reclining ground of the Red man; where, long, long ago, the deadly arrow pursued its last flight; where instruments of rude warfare, the tomahawk and the poisoned barb, are now supplanted by implements of peace and civilization, the plow, the drag, the flail; where the scalping knife is for these years unknown, and the snow-snake and the target, the game of cricket and of ball occupy the thought of these Indians now civilized—furnishes a charming theme for leisure hour contemplation. Though the rudeness of by-gone days is nowhere discernible among these civilized and somewhat Christianized Indians, they have a nationality peculiarly their own, and customs, legends and social life, wholly different from those of every other people.

Their legends, if written, would fill a hundred tomes; transmitted as they are, by word of mouth, crooned out at social councils by the aged, to the youth, these legends lose nothing, but gain much; for Indian minds, like ponderous ships, though hard to start, sweep on, when moved, along the river of deep thoughts. They tell creation's story to the youth, and all these weird tales, just as Mother Goose is retailed to admiring infancy; so that the Indian, who never learned these tales, no matter what his prowess in the field of letters, or in fields of wheat, is only half-developed, just as the child of ours, that has never passed a course in Mother Goose, has not a finished education.

J. W. S.





## CHAPTER I.

### CREATION.

The Indian, like every sensible mythologist, begins with Creation. One tribe relates how the first inhabitants—and all the first inhabitants were Indians—sprang from the heart of the earth. Another tribe has a different notion, depending, as each does, upon the whim of its own story tellers; but with the royal line of tribes—the Senecas—creation's story runs like this:

In the great past, deep waters covered all; indeed, everything was water. Thousands of ducks, large and small, of every varied plumage, sailed upon these waters. What they subsisted on it matters not. One morning when the sun was shining and not a cloud was visible, high above the waters appeared a beautiful woman. Her complexion was very dark. She was falling from the unexplored and boundless ether. The ducks gathered in council, and resolved to meet the fair creature in the air, and break the force of her dangerous fall, by the substantial prop of their strong wings. So they rose, and, pinion overlapping pinion, gave her rest upon their backs, and sailed with their precious freight to the bosom of the placid sea below. But she must be fed, and how?

The bottom was a great way down, and if you in your skepticism ask, how could one reach the bottom of the sea if everything were water, O-yo-ga-weh will reply, "This is the legend, hear it through, let no analysis destroy its sentiment."

The bottom must be reached, and only one family of ducks great brawny fellows, have the endurance to go down to bring up food; for they, just as the camel takes a long supply of water, breathe enough of air to bear them through an hour's jour-

neying. So, down they go, and for long days and many moons care for their *protege*.

This toil becomes a burden, and they hold a council, and resolve to call a turtle from his home below, and start the nucleus of an earth. The turtle obeyed the summons of the ducks; his rounding shell peeps just above the surface and on this they spread a muddy something—which the scientists call protoplasm—and it grows!

For several days the new-made earth expands until it is nearly fifty feet around. Twin boys are given at length to the world's great mother, and, as time flies by, they learn to walk, and soon they find the outer rim of their earth-home, and every day they make the circuit of the earth. And lo! each day they find the circle grown much larger than the day before. At last they cannot go around it in a day, and they wander on and on, and thus the Indian gets his roving disposition. Now the earth, unaided, larger and larger grows until not even the fleet-footed runner nor the speedy horse, can, from sun to sun, traverse its long diameter.

The white man talks of earthquakes, and "foolishly surmises," so the legend says, "that hot and cold have had a falling out." O-yo-ga-weh hears the true solution from the Indian oracle. The earth never quakes, but, when the turtle shifts his position, weary of standing on one foot, he jostles the earth upon his back, that is all. It is true there is fire but the cause is this, the fires that the Indian Vulcan blows, fall off the forge, and the waters of the seas get intermixed and flow upon the forge, and Nature, having interdicted their communion, shows her displeasure and spits forth steamy hisses. This is the legend of the Senecas.

These twin boys, so the legend further states, were not harmonious, for one was good, the other very bad; one was the Lord, the other the Devil; one was the maker of all good, the other, of all evil; one gave those herbs and fruits which make life sweet, the other, all that's poisonous; one made the maize to grow, the other sent the noxious weed and thistle; the one tilled the soil, the other scoured the woods for game;

the one brought for the family supplies, the best his land would yield, the other dragged in, now and then, an old tough meated deer.

Time was when long pine cones, hanging like ear-drops from the boughs, were fit for food, and yielded a delicious, aromatic honey when roasted in the flames; but one day the bad boy had a fit of jealousy and threw ashes in the good boy's face, and on his cones, and that is why cones are no longer fit to eat. The maize itself was sweeter, better far than now, until the bad boy in that fit of jealousy, dashing ashes on the cones, threw some on the maize. He did not spoil the maize for the good boy blew the ashes off, so the maize still has some goodness left.

These boys grew up, and with their growth the breach of harmony kept widening, until the Devil sought the very life of the good boy, whom the legend calls the Lord. The Great Spirit knew all this, and one day he met the good boy in the field and said, "That evil-minded brother is plotting against thy life, and, when you meet again, he will inquire what is the surest instrument to take thy life; he will ask this on pretense of being in sport, and you must tell him that if he stab you with bulrushes you will die. When he is through you ask him what would kill him, and he will tell you honestly that if you strike him with the deer's horns, which go floating in the air, he will die. After this he will change his manner towards you and rush after you with bulrushes in his hand, and when he stabs—of course the bulrushes will be crushed, though he will think they pierce you—take berries from the elder bush and crush them, they will bleed, and he will follow you to see you fall and die.

"While you are running I will send the floating deer's horns from the sky, and you must turn on him." Thus it transpired, and the Devil, seeking to kill the Lord, was himself destroyed, and then, for ages, man had peace. No Indian slew his brother; all the tribes traded together and were kind; the crops were more abundant than ever before; the Cattaraugus teemed with trout: the winters were mild as Spring; the deer

came into camp, and brushed the wigwams as they browsed; the partridges lighted on sleeping Indians and drummed. The woods were full of game.

The death of Ha-ne-go-ate-geh, the evil-minded, removed all evil from the world, and every tribe was happy. A great jubilee was held, to thank Ha-wen-ne-yu, (Great Spirit) for giving peace and plenty.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE DISPERSION OF THE TRIBES AND THE FIRST DOCTOR.

Hundreds of years ago, the Indian tribes were one great family, speaking a common language, occupying that part of New York State where now are New York City and Brooklyn. There was no such thing as sickness or death among them.

They were ruled by a great chief. His equal was never known. He could see into all the future; he could foretell all that was in store for the Indians. The Hudson was their great fishing ground. One day the chief gave orders that every family should build a large canoe; that they were about to move up the river. They obeyed, and soon the river was covered with canoes from bank to bank, for seventy miles. The chief "paddled his own canoe" among the rest.

When they had gone a few miles, they struck another stream at their right, towards the east, and several families followed it. The main body murmured at this, but the chief said, "Let them go, they will become a race by themselves, we will give them a name. Let them be called Mohicans. They shall soon have a language of their own."

The great body moved up the river, and when they reached the site of Albany, they held a council. Some concluded to go right on, and so they did, reaching what is now St. Regis, and to this day they are known as the St. Regis Indians. The chief said, "Let them go; they also will become a great nation. It is the will of the Great Spirit."

All the rest struck the Mohawk river in their journeyings and soon they swarmed like bees again, a large number of them choosing to dwell along the fertile valley of the Mohawk. The chief said, "Let them go, we will hereafter know them by

the name of Mohawks." Next, the great army reached the site of Rome and the chief gave orders, "Take up your canoes; carry them over these hills until we find streams and lakes." What is now Oneida Lake burst upon their view; along its shores hundreds chose to dwell, and the chief addressed the nations in council. "Let them remain, they will not roam far away from us. Let them be called Oneidas."

Oswego lake was reached at length; another company remained and the chief called them the Onondagas. The next that left, he called Cayugas.

For long weeks they traveled without reaching a spot that lured them to remain. They came in time to a high ridge, where were springs and singing brooks and abundance of deer and trout. From the top of the ridge, away to the westward, they saw what appeared to be the silvery moon reclining on the bosom of the earth. It proved to be what is now called lake Erie, and they said, "Ha-wen-ne-yu has stretched out mighty waters. We thank Ha-wen-ne-yu. Here we will dwell"—and they were called the Senecas, a people of noblest sentiments and highest honor. The Senecas were very numerous, there being more of them than had gone from the main body at any three previous departures. "My children," said the great chief, "go down the rushing stream and make your home along its banks." The Senecas, at length, split into three great families, one family remaining along the shores and banks of what are now lake Erie and Niagara; another branch going on until steep banks like precipices stop their march. They meet in council and resolve to build canoes and cross the boiling Niagara. They finally succeed, and, abandoning their canoes, strike into the dense woods. They are known as the Tuscaroras. Another family went to the south and settled, near neighbors to the Senecas, known as the Alleghanies. To-day, in one strong bond of brotherhood, are classed Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas and Senecas, comprising the "Five Nations," famed in history.

The great mass moved on again until they reached a broad stream, the present Mississippi—over which some gen-

erous being had stretched a bridge of two giant logs. Half of the Indians had crossed, and while the bridge was yet loaded heavily, one end gave way, and, swinging back by the force of the current to the hither bank, the great company was split in two. They thought this was the will of the Great Spirit. The chief cried out to them from the other bank, "Make that your home, we go not very far, and we will trade with you. We seek a resting place."

They on the hither bank were Shawnees and Cherokees, and they with whom the chief continued were Dakotas.

All this account purports to be a trustworthy record of the origin and dispersion of the Indian tribes. At all events it is in actual accord with the position of the tribes, and was related by an aged man, who illustrated, for three hours, the course of the tribes by means of his broom-handle cane. But to our narrative:

It seems that for many days and weeks the old chief had determined to turn medicine-man that the Indians might die. They were increasing so fast that he feared the brooks and rivers and lakes would not furnish fish to keep alive so many, so out of pity for the tribes the chief became a medicine-man. Pushing on a few miles farther, the great chief said, "Now we will rest. This is our home. Here we will make our residence." They saw that something hung upon his mind; they feared that something very bad had come to him, and they often asked him what it was. They little thought he meant to be a doctor! to give them nauseous medicines, and bleed them, but so it was. At last he called his people to him; they sat around the great camp-fire. He spoke: "I'll tell you what it is, you will be sick! You will begin to die! Do not forget the words of your great chief. When a man dies, put his body deep down in the ground; put his head to the setting sun, his feet towards the gates of the morning. You will be sick, all of you, and I must tell you what to do. I know all kinds of herbs for medicines." He took a hundred, more or less, of thorns, and stuck them in the ground, each thorn standing for a certain medicine; and he showed them what it would cure.

He said, "I am a doctor now, and you'll be sick. Take close pains with this medicine, for you will see persons sick, and death will come upon them. Give this medicine and sometimes, if you give it right, when death has bitten one of you, this medicine will make death sick, and he will let go and leave you to get well. In future moons you will be visited by a people whose faces are faded and pale. They will fall to scalping you. Death will employ them to kill you off.

"There is not one of them in all our hunting grounds, but they will come on white clouds. You will not understand their language."

Years passed; the old chief was taken sick, and died. His last words were, "After I am dead, and you have buried me, there is something you must do; something I have not told you yet. It is this, I want you all to cry, and make a mournful sound, and make it loud. That shall be called grief, and you must then go to our brothers on the other bank of the stream, and cry aloud, Go-weh! Go-weh! Go-weh! (*Death has come! Death has come! Death has come!*)

This shall be your mournful signal, and it shall rout out all the people. Cry with them. Let the tears pour to the ground, and I will ask Ha-wen-ne-yu to send you deer, and bears, and porcupines."

Just so, it happened. Thus you see that doctors were, before man knew of death or sickness!

## CHAPTER III.

### SNOW SNAKES AND CONSTELLATIONS.

A game peculiar to the Indian and full of excitement is that of Snow-snake. The degree of perfection to which the Indian arrives in the construction of Snow-snakes is wonderful, and the dexterity displayed in shooting them is marvelous. A sapling of hickory, black walnut, or, more often, maple, straight as an arrow, is selected of the proper length, say from six to nine feet, at one end fashioned like the head of a snake, at the other end thin and narrow. The head is made round and with a blunt point, which is usually loaded with sheet-lead. These Snow-snakes are shot sometimes on the snow crust but more often in a channel made through the snow by dragging along a small log.

The Indian places his fore finger against the end of the snake; starts back a rod or two, makes a quick, short run, and sends the Snow-snake shooting along its prepared track with almost the velocity of a bullet. The Indians choose sides and the side that gains the larger number of points is victorious.

It is not uncommon for an Indian to send one of these Snow-snakes a fourth of a mile. Each snake bears the owner's private mark by which the judges are enabled to decide who are victorious. There is a tradition that twelve Indians, six on a side, were playing the game one winter, and in their excitement they did not notice that the snake of one of them kept on without stopping. Every tribe has its great runner, reputed to be the swiftest of all runners by the tribe to which he belongs. So every tribe has one who excels all others with

the bow and arrows, in the game of Snow-snake, ball or javelin throwing.

He, whose Snow-snake had gone on, was the giant of the tribe. He called attention to the flying Snow-snake; all looked. It had risen from the track and from the earth. It seemed to have taken on wings of fire. It soared higher and higher, and increased in size as it rose. At length it took its place among the stars and has since been known as the Dragon constellation.

The war dance commenced with young Indian boys. A company of ten met every night at dusk; and at the end of every week they had what was called the regular dance and a feast. Their feast was rather frugal, consisting, as it did, of boiled corn and beans. At length their festivities developed into a science. One of their number who was a sweet singer seated himself on the top of a heap of earth and made vocal melody for the nine boys who beat the earth down to a rim-like belt around the mound. They must have a better feast; so the singer made out the bill of fare, and, as impromptu suppers are secured sometimes by jolly college mates, so to each Indian boy was allotted the task of furnishing something special for the feast. One was to get a kettle; another—for they seemed bent on a savory soup—was to beg a bone; another was to bring the bowls; another wooden ladles; another was appointed to furnish for dessert, a dog; another, a porcupine; another was to pound the corn for thickening the soup; another—no feast could be complete without some beans—was to bring long black beans, a favorite dish among the Indians. A day of meeting was appointed when all were to report and bring their contributions to the feast.

They met, but brought nothing. The old folks thought them crazy and would not grant their wish.

The singer sang; the boys began a feastless dance. Their heads and hearts grew lighter and lighter as they flew about the mound, until the whole company whirled off into the air. The mother of each several boy seemed then for the first time to take in the situation. One ran with a kettle; another, with

a bone; another, with bowls; another, with wooden ladles; another caught up the white dog; another dragged along a porcupine; another took pounded corn, and another, beans. They all cried aloud to the boys in the air hoping to call them back, but it was forever too late. The boys went out of sight, whirling round the singer, and they are whirling to this day. The singer became the planet Saturn, and the eight boys his moons.

Before the boys were changed to moons they were admonished by the singer not to cast a glance below. One disobeyed and lost his place and fell with lightning speed to the earth. Just as he neared the ground the Great Spirit changed him to a pine tree and by the force of his fall, he plunged deep into the soil; sent out great roots and flourished.

The older Indians mourned for the boys and danced every year where they had beaten down the earth around the mound.

At length they came to commemorate all remarkable events, and especially success in war, by the dance. Dancing forms the principal feature of the religious ceremonies of all the tribes and consists in beating the earth with the foot as the long line of worshipers moves in perfect time around a pole or other central object.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MISFORTUNE OF HAVING A MOTHER-IN-LAW, OR INGRATITUDE PUNISHED.

The tribes went hunting one mild winter, wandering long miles from the old wigwams. A bright young Indian boy, a favorite in the tribe, the idol of his father's heart, came into camp one morning and found his mother dying. It was the first grief of his life, and though she went to dwell in happier hunting grounds, he, whom she had cared for all his life, was left to mourn. At length his father led another mother to their wigwam; but she did not love the Indian boy, and wished she might destroy him, for she thought his father cared more for him than he did for herself.

One day the men were hunting deer, and the new mother asked the boy to help her gather sticks to cook the evening meal. She said, "If we can catch a porcupine and cook him for your father's supper, he will praise us both. I know where we can find them. We will go."

The heartless mother was plotting against the boy. In her prowling through the forest she had found a cave, and she planned to entice the boy to enter it, and she would shut him in. "But how could the cave's mouth be stopped?" She found a flat, heavy stone, and, laboring hard for hours, rolled it to where she could, with little labor, tip it up and close the cave. So she deceived the boy who in his artlessness went into the cave, and, he once in, she tugged at the great stone and tipped it up, and closed the cave, and went away. He saw at last what she had done, and he sat down on the cold floor of the dingy cave, and cried. A porcupine, whose home was in



the cave, came to him in an old woman's form, and said, "My grandson, I am sorry for you, I will help you if I can. I think I can tip back the stone. I wish to do it for this is my home and that the entrance."

She tried the stone, but both of them had not the strength to roll it down. She said, "You sit here just a little while; once there was another outlet, but I have not used it now for years and perhaps I cannot get out that way, but I will try."

But she succeeded, and, calling loudly to the animals, they all assembled to inquire her wish. She told them of her grandson in the cave, and how his cruel mother treated him. The great black bear was seen to weep, and the porcupine asked him to pull away the stone. He put his heavy paws upon the stone, and tugged it down. The porcupine asked, "Who will take the boy and bring him up, and make him a pleasant home?" The wolf said, "I will," but the grand-mother replied, "No, I cannot consent to this; if you get hungry you will, I fear, eat this helpless boy."

The stately deer spoke next, and said, "I will be glad to train and bring him up."

The grandmother made answer to the deer, "Yours is a noble race, but the boy must have a home; you lay up nothing for the winter, I cannot let you have him." Then the bear, weeping for his misfortunes, said, "I have two cubs, but I can care for him. I will lay by honey, and all good things, and keep him well." The porcupine replied, "I'm willing that you have him." So the bear took from a pack she carried, what appeared to be a cape, and this she put upon the shoulders of the Indian boy, and he became a cub. He trotted off with his new-made mother, carrying his pack with the rest.

Now it seems that the old bear determined to make good use of the boy. One day they came to a large settlement of bears of another family, and, while it was criminal to steal from bears of their own kith and kin, it was a virtue to take from bears of other families. This settlement of bears was very large. It was the time of berries, and the bears had put up sheds of peeled hemlock bark, and scattered their berries on

the top to dry. The old bear said to the boy, "I will now take off your cape and you will become like a man again, and you must take your bows and arrows and sound the war-whoop and run among these bears, and they will flee away, and we can take their dried berries, and be provided for all winter," So the boy struck up the war-whoop, and the bears, unused to such melody, seeing the strange figure fled in consternation, leaving everything behind. The old bear and her cubs filled up their packs, and hurried on. Sometimes they were pursued by hunters, but the bear had great experience and knew how to evade them. She had three ways of doing it, as follows: On the approach of the hunters, she hid with her cubs in a hollow tree, and when the dogs came up she threw out a partridge feather at the opening, and just then a partridge would fly up, (birds and beasts were in league with each other), and the dogs would be drawn away from the tree. Again, when the hunter himself pressed close upon them she would push out from their hiding place a long pole. With one end of the pole she would touch the hunter's head, the other end resting against the tree. As he approached, the pole, which he did not perceive to touch him, would swing him away from their hiding place. One day she had a very narrow escape and was compelled to resort to the third and last means of protection. She had concealed herself and cubs in a hollow and the dogs came to the tree and persisted in barking. The hunter hastened to the tree; just as he came near, the bear put both her paws up at the opening, and the soft pads of her feet looked like rotten wood, and the hunter called the dogs away, even cuffing them for wasting precious time barking at rotten wood.

When they were out of sight, the bear took her paws down and ran away with her cubs at the top of her speed.

They lived on berries and fared well. Sometimes they found a tree filled with honey and they always managed with the help of the boy to get it all. If the bees took refuge in a hollow they could not reach, the Indian boy would cut the tree down with his tomahawk. This old bear became a terror to

all other bears because she had an Indian to help her. Her power and ferocity were known to all the hunters and they sought her out. One day she told the boy that they must part. She tied a band of red leaves about his neck and said, "Wear this always, and any that have injured you, when they see this, will be taken sick and die."

They heard the baying of the hounds in the distance, and the bear took her cubs to a hollow tree and said, "When the hunter comes, I will go out first and he will shoot at me, but I will deceive him. He will not kill me nor my two cubs, for they will do the same that I have done. The dogs will not leave the tree, but will bark until the hunter finds you." She said moreover to the boy, "Remember when you go among your people how I have cared for you when you had no friend. Now promise me that you will never kill one of our kind, and that you will never lead other hunters to our homes." "How shall I know your homes from those of other bears?" asked the boy.

She said, "The smoke from our fires will curl in a straight column into the air, but the smoke of the fires of other bears will spread out when it rises. You may kill all other kinds but promise not to kill any of ours."

He promised. The hunter and dogs came up and everything turned out as the bear had said.

When the hunter looked down the hollow tree and saw the boy, he knew him, for he was his own nephew. He lifted the boy from the cave and asked him why he deserted the bear to her fate. "Had you shown yourself first I would not have shot the bear and her two cubs." The boy said, "It is all right uncle, you have not killed the bear or her cubs."

The boy was taken home. When he reached his father's wigwan, there was one person very sorry to see him, and that was his step-mother, who put him in the cave and shut him in. When she saw the band of red about his neck she was taken very sick and in a few hours died.

The Indian boy became a man, and married a beautiful

Indian maiden. She loved him because he was the swiftest runner in the tribe, and because the largest bears were his strong friends. His mother-in-law seemed to think he married her too when he took the daughter, for she moved to the wigwam of her son-in-law and soon became offensive. She was always teasing him for bear's meat, and he kept her well supplied. She told him that she wanted a particular kind, and he knew it was the very kind he had promised never to kill. For many moons he refused her the kind she wanted. He would go into the woods and watch the smoke curling in straight columns, and would say, "I will not take the life of my best friends, no, not even to please my mother-in-law." She troubled him so much that, at last, in desperation he shot a bear that belonged to the family of his benefactors.

That very night a message came that he must meet the bears forty miles away at daylight four days hence. He prepared to go. The messenger told him that he would run a race, and that perhaps he would perish for his ingratitude. He felt hard towards his mother-in-law who had betrayed him into trouble. He bade his people farewell and set out for the place appointed. He reached there an hour before dawn; the bears were there before him. The running course was marked out. At the farther end a hemlock bristling with knots, lay across the course. This, the runners must jump. It was told the Indian that he must run with four bears, four separate races. So he prepared. He tied on his tomahawk. The race with the first bear began; when they had gone half way, the Indian raised his tomahawk, and buried its edge in the skull of the competing runner, then easily jumped the tree, running to the end of the course. The second bear was speedier than the first. They ran together. When two-thirds to the end, the Indian struck the second down. The third approaches—one of the swiftest runners of the whole family of bears. When they had traversed three-fourths of the course, the Indian struck him down, and won an easy victory.

The fourth bear was the swiftest runner of all bears. The Indian felt his heart beat quicker. He had a dread of run-

ning with this one. If he succeeded in winning the race, he would become the Great Chief; but if he failed he knew the bears would tear him in pieces, for, Judas-like he had betrayed his dearest friend.

The race began. The trees were full of birds, and all the leaning trees were loaded down with bears. The whole animal creation had assembled to witness the momentous contest. The crows sat in the most honored place, and gave the start. The Indian fixed his anxious eye upon the goal, and ran with strange phrenzy; but the bear kept even with him, step in step. He tried all ways to get ahead, but close beside him ran the bear. A few rods only of the course remain, and the bear is just ahead! The birds, in their excitement, darted from the limbs, and sailed in wild confusion over the runners. The bears growled out encouragement to their runner, and urged him on, but no one cheered the Indian; he saw that he was being distanced. Visions of his horrible fate awaiting him, if he failed, drove him almost mad. He clinched his tomahawk and leveled a blow at bruin's head—but missed, and when they reached the knotty hemlock, the bear cleared it at a bound, but the Indian, now discouraged and bewildered, stumbled where he should have jumped, and, falling heavily upon a knot, was pierced to the heart; and thus the Great Spirit punished him for his ingratitude.

## CHAPTER V.

### DANCES AND FESTIVALS.

The Indian New Year begins when the first new moon in February is five days old. It is believed by the Pagan Indians that the dance is a divine institution. The Indians are a religious people. The dance forms one of their chief religious ceremonies. The observance of their six regular festivals is scrupulously kept up. The Protestant Indians have no part in these dances and festivals, regarding them as Pagan rites. Christianity is teaching a more simple and satisfactory worship, and it finds favor among them because of the improvements everywhere following in its wake. But, hardly an Indian can be found that does not venerate the Great Spirit. The New Year's festival, though often classed as the last, we shall describe at the head of the list. It continues seven days. On the fifth day the white dog is burned. Great stress is laid on the confessing of their sins. The dog is burned as a sacrifice, and in the smoke of the burning dog their sins are borne away.

The confessing of their sins is done by the job and is thought by them to avail for a whole twelve-month.

The commencement of the New Year's jubilee is duly announced by two Indians, said to be "keepers of the faith," who formerly dressed in bears' skins or buffalo robes; these garments being fastened about their heads with wreaths of corn husks.

They usually started in the morning, and on entering a house, one of them made the following address: "Listen, listen, listen:—The ceremonies which Ha-wen-ne-yu, (Great Spirit,) has commanded us to perform, are now to commence.

Prepare your houses. Clear away the rubbish. Drive out all wild animals. We wish nothing to hinder us in the ceremonies soon to commence. We exhort you every one to obey what we ask. Should any of your friends be taken sick and die, we command you not to mourn for them, nor allow any of your friends to do so. But lay the body aside, and enjoy the ceremonies with us. When they are over we will mourn with you." This was for the morning visit. In the afternoon they returned and made the following speech:—My Nephews, my Nephews, my Nephews; we now announce to you that the New Year's ceremonies have commenced, according to our ancient custom. You are each required to go forth and participate in their observance. This is the will of Ha-wen-ne-yu. Your first duty will be to stir up the ashes on your neighbors' hearths. Then thank Ha-wen-ne-yu, each of you, for the return of this season, and for the privilege of enjoying their festivities." Then they sang. Repeating this form at every house concluded the ceremonies of the first day. Preparation was made also on this day for coming days. The white dog was strangled. It was contrary to their religion to offer a sacrifice, a single bone of which had been broken, or a drop of blood, shed. After being strangled the dog is spotted with red paint or decked all over with many-colored ribbons. In this plight he is suspended from a pole until the fifth day, when he is taken down and burned.

According to injunction the people stir the ashes on their neighbors' hearths on the second day of the festival with wooden shovels, and sprinkling a portion over the hearths, they thank Ha-wen-ne-yu that the lives of the dwellers there are spared, and that they themselves are alive to perform their duties.

On the third and fourth days the dances are inaugurated. Some dance the Feather dance; some dance the War-dance, continuing until late in the evening. Just after dawn on the fifth day the white dog is laid upon an altar near the council-house and burned. The ceremony of burning the white dog was formerly quite imposing; at the present day it is very

much simplified. The customs of the whites are fast obliterating the ancient landmarks of the Indian nations.

The address, or speech as the Senecas call it, is eloquent and impressive. It is always spoken by one of the "keepers of the faith," now called the Pagan high priest. The address is very ancient. For more than fifty years it has been substantially as given below. The writer is indebted for the speech to Rev. Joseph Turkey, who took it down at a late New Year's festival. The "keeper of the faith" first invokes Ha-wen-ne-yu asking his attention, and having secured it as he thinks, thus speaks:

"Hail! Hail! Hail! Open your ear to hear what thy people have to say. The smoke of our offering now bears our words to thee. Behold thy people gathered here. See! they have come here to celebrate religious customs thou hast given us. Kind Father look down upon us. Let us have wisdom to perform faithfully what thou hast commanded. Continue to listen: The voice of all thy people is ascending to thee. By thy wisdom help thy people to avoid everything which would tempt thy people to change their ancient faith. Give us power to celebrate with our strength, and faithfully, the religious ceremonies given to us by thyself.

"Continue to listen: May the keepers of the faith get wisdom from thee to perform thy commands aright. Give to all of us strength to perform the sacred things which came from thee. We give thanks to thee for these ceremonies. We give thanks that thou has preserved the ceremonies as they have always been. Continue to listen: We give thanks to thee that the lives of so many of us, thy children, are spared to share in the duties of this festival. We give thanks to our mother, the earth, which sustains us. We give thanks to thee that thou hast caused her to yield her fruits in such abundance. Help her to hold back nothing in the year to come, that all may have abundance. We give thanks to the rivers and streams, running in their courses on the bosom of our mother, the earth. We give thanks to all the herbs and plants. We thank thee that thou has been so good to us in giving to



the plants the power to make us strong and healthy, and to cure our sickness which evil spirits have cast upon us. We thank thee for the great harvest we have had in the past year. We give thanks to the bushes and trees, which keep us supplied with berries and fruit. We are glad and thankful that thou hast blessed them. We ask that they may not refuse their fruit in the future.

“We give thanks to the winds which drive away disease and pestilence. Thou hast ordered it so, and we thank thee. May the winds always give this blessing. We give thanks to our grandfather *Heno*, (the Thunderer, a god of storms,) for sending us rains to give us water and to cheer our plants. May *Heno* not forget us. We give thanks to the moon and stars for sending us light when the sun has lain down to rest. We thank thee that thou hast so wisely provided for us, that we have no lack of light. Let this good gift continue. We give thanks to the sun that he has looked with kindly eye upon us; we give thanks to thee that thy wisdom which has no bounds has made the sun to dispose the seasons, to give heat and cold and to make thy people comfortable. May we have that wisdom which shall direct us to truth. Keep us from all bad ways that the sun may never be ashamed of us and hide his face and surround us with darkness.

“We give thanks to the *Ho-no-che-no-keh*, (ministering spirits.) We thank thee that thou hast given so many spirits to help us be good and happy.

“Last of all, we give thanks to thee our Creator and Lord. In thee dwell all things; we know thou canst do no evil; everything thou doest is for our good and enjoyment. Pity thy people if they disobey thee. Be kind to us as to our fathers in the great past. Hear our words as they ascend to thee; may they be pleasing to thee, our Creator, the Preserver and Lord of all things seen and unseen. *Na-ho*.” (*I have done*, used at the end of speeches.)

This address or prayer is followed by dancing and other amusements, and by the feast. On the following day—the sixth—comes the Thanksgiving dance. The seventh and last

day of the ceremonies is occupied with games and the performance of religious rites similar to the foregoing, and thus close their worship and festivities.

These shadows of true religion are not without their influence on the Indians, and groping in the dark as they have been doing, it is quite surprising that such fruits as peace, hospitality, friendship, brotherly love, reverence of the Great Spirit, are characteristic of them, but this is the fact. These civilized Indians are hospitable; they will sit for hours conversing with their guests, and studying their pleasure. The Indian is strong in his likes and dislikes, but true to his clan and tribe.

## CHAPTER VI.

### HOW HE AVENGED AN INJURY.

Away back in the dim past, when Buffalo with the surrounding country was a wilderness, there was planted on the shores of Lake Erie a broad settlement of Indians. Among their most formidable enemies were the Illinois. One winter a band of Illinois warriors set out for this settlement of the Senecas. They traveled days and weeks and, at length one day before the dawn burst upon the villagers. The Senecas made stout resistance. A score of their number were slain. A youth of fifteen and a woman of middle age were taken captives. The warriors set out for their own hunting grounds and wigwams, taking the well-known trail. The first night on the journey was a night of restlessness to the youth and woman. Their feet were sore with the hard day's tramp. The warriors built a roaring fire, and sat in solemn council around it. They called out the boy and said to him in their own language, which he understood, "You are our captive; we ask you to join us in the war-song, and enjoy yourself all you can. We shall not harm you." The warriors reviewed the scenes of the day, then sang their war-song, but the boy pretended not to know their language, and he knew they were wholly ignorant of his. He did not sing their war-song, but made motions asking if he might sing in his own language. They gave consent, and this was what he sang: "I shall never forget what you have done to my people. I shall repay your tribe for this. You have stolen a helpless woman and a little boy from their people and their home. I shall never forget it. If I am spared you will all lose your scalps." He sang so earnestly

that they were pleased, thinking that he would soon become one of them, and never think of his own people. The third day of their journey was too hard for the poor woman; she began to faint. The warriors halted, and while they held a council on her case, she told the Indian boy that they would kill her. So she said to him, "Avenge my blood, and when you go back to our people tell them how the cruel Illinois have beaten me, and taken my life; and, promise me that you will never cease to be a Seneca." He promised all she asked, and when the council ended, she, poor creature, was slain with a battle-axe and left behind.

They hastened on, arriving at length at the immediate suburb of their own village early in the evening. They held a council and resolved not to enter until the next morning. So, early the next day, two runners were sent ahead to announce the coming of the warriors. The people gathered to greet them. With their wildest yell the warriors rushed into the village, and, gathering all the people around the great council-fire, rehearsed with inflammable eloquence the exploits of the march.

So excited were the people at the recital, that they seized clubs and beat the earth with wild phrenzy as if slaying the hated Senecas. When the excitement subsided they bethought them of the captive boy, and it was with great difficulty that the warriors restrained them from killing him outright.

All assembled in council again and the warriors harangued them, and said, "Now let us plan what torture this boy shall suffer; as our dogs, before they take the life of the young bear which they have caught, make sport with him, so let us do with this captive, and if he lives through all the tortures he shall become an Illinois. Our tribe is full of braves and if this boy can bear our punishment let him become an Illinois." A general grunt gave sanction to this opinion.

The night before, the boy had had a dream, in which, it seems, was revealed to him all that the Illinois would inflict upon him.

The council-fire was now a mass of glowing coals. The Indians took the captive boy and placed him, bare-footed on the coals. The soles of his feet became one mass of blister. Then an aged warrior, with a needle made of slender fish-bone, pierced the sufferer's heels, and filled the blisters with sharp gravel stones. "You must now run a race of twenty rods," they said.

It was revealed to him in the dream how he might know whether they would spare his life, and this was the revelation: "Running the race he would enter the Long House, and, if he could get a seat on a wild cat's skin, he would be spared."

The Indians stationed themselves in two rows from the beginning to the end of the running course, the captive to run between the rows. Each Indian was armed with a club, a branch of thorn-tree, or a bunch of briars, and it was allowed them all to strike him, as he ran, upon the back. No one should beat him from the front. The captive awaited in awful agony, the signal for the start, and when it was given, he asked if he might sing his war-song. They consented, and thus is what he sang, "I shall never forget this cruelty; if I am spared, you will lose your scalps." While singing this he forgot his tortured feet; the pain had left him, and his courage came again. Turning slowly about, he gazed for an instant on the rows of savage warriors, then, bounding like a deer pursued by the hounds, he sprang into the course and shot with an arrow's speed, so swift of foot, that he reached the end of the course and not an Indian had hit him. He rushed into the Long House and found it crowded, but at length he espied a place on which to sit; it was a log covered with a wild cat's skin, but an Indian sat upon the skin, and, glad of a slender chance of life, he sat upon the wild cat's tail, and when the Indian moved he crowded up and gained a larger piece. It happened that an old Indian and his wife had had a captive boy whom they adopted as their son, but he had died.

The chief said, "If this boy is trained he will make a brave Illinios, and," he continued, "the old man who trained the other boy would take this one if he were back among us; but

he has gone on a long trail, and it seems to me that we should kill this boy."

Long hours of solemn council followed. All thought the boy had borne the tortures well and that he was of good stuff and would make a brave warrior. Many, therefore, said, "We should spare his life, he will join us and forget the Senecas." The most said, "No, he has not seen tests enough and we think he can bear no more and are in favor of taking his life." It was decreed that in three days he should be burned at the stake.

The day arrived; the circle of pine knots was fired, and the boy was tied with thongs to a post planted in the center of the circle. The warriors applied the gleaming pitch knots to the ankles of the boy. Just then the old man who had trained the other Indian captive came near, returning from his march in the forest. When the boy saw him draw his scalping-knife he thought, "The old man pities me, and will now end my misery," but it was done in a way the boy did not expect, for the Indian cut the thongs which bound him and set him free. He then addressed the warriors and gained his point, for he had great authority among them, saying, "I will take the captive. His eye is bright. He will make a mighty warrior. I will try him with our last tortures and then will take him to my wigwam." He led the sufferer to a spring, and, as if the boy had shown too little proof of stuff fit for an Illinois, he told the boy to get down and drink. When he did this the old man pushed him under and nearly strangled him. This was repeated thrice, until the boy was too exhausted to stand, but he was alive. Thus he had stood the tests and the Indian took him home, dressed his blistered feet and he was called an Illinois. They little thought how deep the tortures burned hatred into his heart.

He grew to be a man. A chief gave him his daughter for his wife. They thought he had forgotten their tortures. But there rankled in his heart the fresh remembrance of his wrongs, and wrongs no Indian forgets. He fell in with all the customs of his tribe and seemed a loyal man. The warriors

went on predatory exploits every year, but Sa-geh-jo-wa kept at home, and on their return led the triumphal marches of the warriors through the village.

He gained the esteem and admiration of the tribe, for he was never equaled as a hunter, and the feats of strength which he performed were something marvelous.

At length, when he had been among them nearly fifteen years, he asked to go with them, especially, as he heard the leaders talk of going against the Senecas. They were delighted, as he described in passionate language how he would fight and gain more scalps than all the rest. The warriors not only consented to his going, but applauded him for loyalty and for his willingness to fight the Senecas. They little thought his boast of getting scalps would be fulfilled on them. But we shall see.

All the warriors of the tribe, both old and young, sprang to their feet rejoicing at his words. They put him at their head and he led the way for many days until at daybreak one fair morning they saw the smoke rising from the wigwams of the Senecas. Here was the boyhood home of Sa-geh-jo-wa at the time of his capture by the Illinois. A halt was ordered. The wily leader said, "Send out two warriors to a sugar camp four miles ahead and let them scout around the sugar-bush, and bring back a report of what they've seen, and we will burn the wigwams and scalp the settlers." The warriors were selected; they went, but came back with the news that the sugar-bush was deserted. So he described to them another settlement. They went again but brought the same intelligence. They had seen no sign of life, only it appeared that the Senecas had been there not very long before. There were heaps of ashes, but every camp fire had gone out.

The warriors sat in council. Their leader spoke, "Tomorrow send me and another, and we will bring report of something better." A grunt of assent was his commission to do what he thought good. Next morning the two set out; when they had gone five miles or more, Sa-geh-jo-wa, the lead-

er, said to his companion, "We will take different ways, and I am sure we will strike an Indian trail. You go over that ridge of hills and down the long valley and meet me on the brow of that high mountain, three miles towards the setting sun, and I will make a circuit through the valley on the other side." His companion set out as directed, while Sa-geh-jo-wa turned in an opposite direction towards a clearing where he thought were Senecas. He ran along the valley, entered the clearing, found one family of Indians whom he knew, and they knew him. He gave his message in few words, hurriedly whispered, "A band of hated Illinois is in the little valley. I'll lead the warriors in to-morrow noon. Go to the wigwams of the Senecas, fire the warriors of the tribe and let them come out in full force. Tell them to come early, and hide along the ridge above the valley. I will be known to them by a white heron's feather on my crest, and I will stumble in the bush and fall; let this be the signal for the Senecas. Be quick! Tell the Senecas Sa-geh-jo-wa is true!"

He hastened to the spot agreed upon as the meeting place with his companion, arriving there a few moments before the other warrior. Both reported nothing seen and hastened back to the warriors. "Now," said Sa-geh-jo-wa, "let us descend upon the village. I know a valley where no Indian hides. I know these hills; I have chased the deer among these valleys. We will follow the narrow way through the hidden valley and enter the village. See! there rises the smoke from the great camp fire of the Senecas. Warriors, to-morrow I shall take three hundred scalps. First appoint a guide, your bravest warrior, to go with me, and we will go ahead. Appoint two others also, to come behind, to follow at a distance. Let us be guarded." So it was ordered, for all admired his skill at planning. They settled down for the night. The warriors started in their sleep, as in their dreams they saw long strings of scalps.

Day dawned, and every Indian made ready, proud of the opportunity of making good the boast of Sa-geh-jo-wa that three hundred scalps should be the trophy of that day. All,



but their leader, little thought that five hundred Senecas, the bravest of the brave, were in the valley just after dawn, but so it was.

They began the march. At noon they entered the valley and the leader cast his eye about to know if all were ready; if his orders to the Senecas were obeyed. With much delight he espied a face among the bushes just above him on the ridge, and he knew the Senecas were ready. He led his followers far down into the valley, and, making a misstep, he fell. At that instant the war-whoop echoed and re-echoed among the hills. Springing to his feet he slew the warrior at his side and turned to help the Senecas.

The Illinois were slain, all but the two who guarded the rear; they fled.

Three hundred warriors fell! Wild with delight at seeing again their brother and crippling the haughty Illinois, they hastened to the village. The shout of victory called out the people. Three hundred scalps were glory enough for Sa-geh-jo-wa. A great jubilee was held; it lasted far into the night, and the victor told of his life among their cruel enemies. Pointing to the pole whence dangled the scalps, ghastly in the murky and fitful glare of the dying camp fire, Sa-geh-jo-wa rehearsed the black deeds of the Illinois. He had avenged the tortures he had suffered, and the blood of the poor woman who fainted by the way.

Sa-geh-jo-wa lived and died among the Senecas, and, when they bore him to his narrow grave they placed beside him a four-fold supply of bows and arrows, tomahawks and spears, for use in the happy hunting grounds. To this day his name is honored.

## CHAPTER VII.

### MARRIAGES AND BURIALS.

It has been asserted by more than one historian that love is unknown among the Seneca Indians. So gross a misrepresentation should never have been published. Whatever apparent lack of the tender passion may have been detected is due to match-making. It is true that in years gone by the Indian lads and lasses haven't had a ghost of a chance to fall effectually in love, for, supposing them to have exchanged glances and two hearts to have begun sweetly to beat as one, their mammas, as the youth learn to their sorrow, have planned differently, and, since this business of match-making, peculiar to (Indian) women, is wholly monopolized by the squaws whose sons and daughters are marriageable, what encouragement, we ask, have the young Indians, to fall in love? Many a time have these mothers entered into negotiations for their children without their knowledge, they having no intimation of what is going on, until, like a thunder-clap from a cloudless sky, the announcement is solemnly made to them that they are married!

A celebrated writer has said, "When an old man marries a young woman, it is man's work; when a young man marries a young woman, it is the Lord's work; but when a young man marries an old woman, it is the devil's work." It appears that anciently the officious squaws, having an eye to the correct and thorough discipline of young warriors, married the latter with painful uniformity to women several years their seniors, all which undoubtedly affords a solution of the mystery as to where the warriors acquired such skill and bravery in fighting. It was no mean discipline they learned!

The passion of love was not unknown, but smothered. What would be the use of falling in love when custom, rigid, exacting custom, coupled with the certainty of disownment if not obedient, held the youth in check with iron grasp.

The influence of modern society has reached the Senecas, though the custom of match-making, so rare among the pale faces! has by no means died out among them. The principle that actuates the Indian mother is a good one. She soliloquizes: "My son is of the proper age to marry; I will cast about for a companion." Every marriage lessens crime, and the Indian has some honor.

In these days great improvement has been effected in match-making. Although the young Indian's partner is selected for him, he is allowed to fall in love with her before the final ceremony is performed. This, it will be noticed, is a long step forward. One feature of Indian match-making rescued the system from all reproach, and if, by legislation or otherwise, it could become an unavoidable accompaniment of match-making everywhere, it would be well. The redeeming feature is this: The parties who made the match were held responsible for all discord or quarreling between the pair! but if harmony could not be restored they separated.

Modern divorce laws have done nothing towards perpetuating sacred regard for marriage vows among the Indians and often on merest pretense the Indian breaks the marriage tie. The writer was appealed to on one occasion by the most sorrowful looking Indian he ever saw, and the following conversation ensued: "Had bad luck with my squaw; she bad squaw, I get you to help me. I get a divorce. You give me one." "No," was the reply, "I cannot do that." "Church folks give divorce then; bad squaw." "No, church cannot do it." He went away deeply sighing.

Investigation disclosed that he had been drunk on fire-water and, attempting to abuse his companion, she had soundly thrashed him.

Polygamy is not practised by the Indians. Notwithstanding the level of moral tone among the tribes is far below what

it is among the whites, an Indian who attempts to take two wives is stigmatised by the tribe, and his influence goes for nought thereafter. "Too much squaw" has wrought the downfall of more than one influential Indian.

Separation by mutual consent is allowed and regarded sometimes as just. The abuses of this license, however, are numerous as are the whims and pretenses of a disaffected Indian. There is need, in order to the permanent improvement of the Senecas, that certain disabilities be removed. Treated, as they now are by the law, as children, not held responsible for their word nor bound by any legal obligation to pay their debts, it is little wonder that marriage among them has sunk below its divine level, for, standing in the relation of minors, with all the legal disabilities of children, every sacred obligation suffers.

There are those who live happily together with many comforts of home about them.

A wedding among them is a very romantic affair. The writer performed the marriage ceremony for two Indian couples; the first was repeatedly postponed, once, because a neighbor happened in just at the appointed hour. This neighbor had not been invited and the ceremonies were brought to a stand-still; again the wedding was postponed because the young lady was suffering from a cold. After about three months, everything was propitious; the sign of the Zodiac was in the heart. Nothing could be more favorable. If it were in the head the woman would be sure to talk too much, if in her feet, to run too much, but being in the heart she would take good care of her house and love her husband. The company assembled at the house of a neighbor. They sang a hymn. Inquiring for the parties to be joined, to the surprise of the officiating clergyman, a young man was pointed out who sat with chair tipped back against the wall and feet aloft resting on the top of the high stove a most indifferent looking object. The bride, a bright young girl of seventeen, came tripping in from another room where she had been engaged up to the last moment, in preparation for the meal to follow. A signi-

ficant grunt stirred up the young man and he took his place. The ceremony was performed through an Indian interpreter. Congratulations followed. The older Indians present took occasion to give the groom the benefit of their experience, admonishing him to profit by it.

The other ceremony was performed in January, 1878, and was a fine affair. The groom was the son of one of the leading chiefs of the tribe, and the bride was of no mean family. Extensive preparations had been made by the groom's father, at whose house was the gathering. A hymn was sung in Seneca. We give one stanza:

Jat gat huh he ni sho gwa wih,  
 Neh no nen nyah si yu  
 Sha dih ni go ant, sho, na eh,  
 Neh no nah gao yah geh.

A large company had gathered. The bride and groom were neatly dressed. During the ceremony there were many tears shed, for the Indians seemed fully to appreciate the scene. There was much sympathetic joy. After the congratulations half a score of the men and women took the young Indian by the hand, and, in turn, gave such advice as they thought fit. Not one word of advice was offered the bride! but upon the groom it fell in great profusion.

One old man, a Pagan, made this speech: "You have taken this woman for your wife. She leaves her mother, her father, her sisters, her brothers and her friends to be your wife. Do not forget to love her. As she has left everything for you, be kind to her. Do not forget these words. The Great Spirit looks down and hears what you have promised. Remember that the Great Spirit can see everything and if you are not true, He will know it. Love her who is now made your wife. Always remember these my words."

The feast followed. A long table was tastily spread; the food placed upon it was well-cooked and clean. It was a chicken-supper, with sauce, and bread, and pie, and corn-bread. What did it matter that no butter graced the board? Is it not the latest freak of etiquette among pale-faces even, to eat one meal without it?

## BURIALS.

It has ever been a part of the religious faith of the Senecas to venerate the dead. Before the light of civilization broke in upon the sombre solitude of the forest, the tribes performed services for the dead in their own peculiar and elaborate way.

In these days their burial customs are quite like those of the whites, but an Indian is an Indian always and many little details of burial, suited to their tastes, will never be given up. No bodies are placed on bark platforms as formerly; no skelewing among the branches. No family skeletons are preserved to be mourned over for long years as was their wont not many years ago. Tomahawks, bows, arrows, spears and javelins are no longer laid beside the dead, but the old custom of wailing, speech-making and singing of mournful hymns is common to this day.

A funeral ceremony as conducted by the Senecas is touching and beautiful. A young man, sixteen years old, was buried from the Mission House. He had been a great sufferer for months, and his suffering seemed the more to have endeared him to his mother's heart. The Senecas had gathered slowly in; deep solemnity characterized the service. There were bowed heads and wet cheeks in that assembly. After the usual form of Scripture reading and prayer, a native preacher arose and addressed the people a half-hour. The Senecas do not move past the coffin in procession, but, here and there one rises in the audience and goes forward to view the remains, then passes out. Much time is consumed in this way. When all who wish have looked upon the dead, the family go forward. The grief of the mother on this occasion was deep and terrible. Her frame quivered, and anon a heart-piercing wail of anguish broke forth. Amid her tears and sobbing she addressed a few words of eulogy to her son to the effect that he had been a kind, a loving son, who, unexpectedly had gone on a long journey a little before her; that they would meet again never to part. She passed out hiding her tears and grief with the blanket which she wore tightly drawn over her head. Then the bearers performed their service, and, as the sorrow-

ing procession moved down the aisle, a mournful chant was sung by a score or more of Senecas, and the remains were borne away to the grave.

On the Sunday following an Indian arose in the congregation and said, "Our mourning neighbors have great grief. They wish to pay their funeral expenses. Let us share the load they are carrying. It seems to me that we ought to help them; we can help them and lift this burden from their shoulders; their grief is burden enough." The collection was taken and the full amount raised. Only the Great Spirit knows how much of heaven's blessing shall be portioned out to these sympathetic souls.

On another funeral occasion the tender regard of a sorrow-stricken father for the memory of his wife brought tears to many an eye. The funeral was at a school house on the reservation. It seems that the Indian's wife had died a few months before leaving a little girl. The mother had bequeathed her all—consisting of a ring and a few dresses and some unimportant articles—to the little daughter. Now the father is called to lay away the only one of all his family, and he is in the world alone.

The services concluded, an Indian, whose duty it was to make announcements, arose and said: "This father now lays away his child. His wife he buried a number of months ago. When she died she left a few things for her child; but the child too is dead. The father is poor and often sick. It would be right, according to our custom for the father to sell the ring and dresses and get money to pay the funeral expenses, and he is poor and sick, but he asks me to announce that he will try and bear the funeral expenses; he does not like to sell the things that belonged to his wife. He asks me to say these things."

The father was the only mourner. He gazed long and eagerly upon his child, and when the bearers, singing the mournful chant, lifted the little coffin and bore their charge to the grave, the flood-gates opened and the father bowed himself and wept long and bitterly.

Let it not be said that affection is wanting in the Indian character. The Indian has been treated as a brute, a dog. We have known him on the war-path, not at his fireside. He may be defrauded, crushed, but he has the instincts of a man. To educate and Christianize him is more politic than to attempt annihilation.

Custom was years ago to leave a slight opening to the grave that the spirit might revisit the body and find easy access to its former place. The custom of feasting after a stated period of mourning, undoubtedly arose from the commonly prevailing idea that the journey to heaven required many days, and until the spirit reached the happier realms there should be mourning on earth; but on the completion of the journey it was thought not only proper but a matter of duty to feast and rejoice.

The Indians believe that there is a path to heaven from every man's door, but that he may turn away from it and fall among bad spirits.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### DOMESTIC LIFE AND HOSPITALITY.

What can sound more strange to the general public than an invitation to gather at the fireside of the Senecas? to inspect their home life? As usually understood the Senecas are thought to be wanting in those social elements indispensable to happy homes. They are thought to be always roving and never stable. The indolence, and natural aversion of the Indian to work, his nomadic habits have been rehearsed to the world and exaggerated. As there is a redeeming side to the picture let it be held to public gaze, and public censure may be restrained if commendation be not elicited for this peculiar people. The true inwardness of Seneca social life can be understood by no mere observation of a day. One has need to dwell among the people, to sit at their tables, to mingle in their neighborhood councils, to study their modes of thought, to watch the little details of every-day life, ere competent to give a fair representation of their higher characteristics.

The romance of the wigwam is a thing of the past, the Indians now living, many of them, in respectable style in good houses. The larger number of their dwellings, however, are a cross between a wigwam and a house, evolving a log hut with two or three rooms, unplastered, unpapered and unadorned, excepting now and then a flaming circus poster peeled from some fence. The Seneca has a weakness for bright colors, but displays remarkable taste in the intermingling of them.

Contact with the pale-faces has worn off the angularities of savage life, so that now many a modern custom is ingrafted on this hardy stock. Not all the polished ways of civilization find genial soil in Indian traits. The humanity of father Adam is somewhat chronic among the Indians and, like every other follower of fashion, the Seneca has little difficulty in falling into the pernicious ways of the white race, and, to the shame of the latter, let it be whispered, there are greater attempts to corrupt and ruin the Senecas than to elevate and save them. Where is the decency, not to mention the justice, of trading whiskey, beer and cider, as many do, for the Indian's corn, oats and wheat, driving him to desperation, inflaming his savage nature, letting loose the wolves of want and wretchedness to invade and destroy his home! Who shall measure the accumulations of "wrath against the day of wrath" for those who, in total disregard of the enforced inferiority incident to the minority and dependence of the Indian race, give the fire-water and take the substantial profits of the Indian's land?

Noble social traits are displayed by the Senecas. Approach the door of the hut or more refined dwelling and a voice within says "come." You are greeted with smiles. You are struck with the entire absence of airs and feel at home at once. If the head of the household can speak the English, you are treated to long, minute, accurate accounts of the exploits of the tribe in the olden time. Having no written language only as the sounds of the language are represented by English letters with marks of accentuation, memory is king, and, having abundant leisure, the Indian rehearses over and over again all that ever he knew. His peculiar idiom is novel and charming, and you unconsciously fall into a sort of dream-land reverie as the narrator pours forth a stream of discourse fresh and sparkling as the spring-fed brooklet that babbles past his door. In the progress of the narrative neighbors drop in and they listen with strict attention, at times, suggesting little details and variations passed over by the story-teller. The afternoon flies by and you rouse to the realities

of hunger. It may be that a large kettle of hulled corn simmers over the fire and its savory incense gives edge to your appetite for the rich light biscuit which the Indian matron takes piping hot from the oven. You are a welcome guest at the table of the Indian, but you eat alone. You must bear in mind that the bounty spread is for all the family and you must not clear the board. 'Tis true there is no lack but etiquette demands consideration on your part. You wonder at this strange custom, and the matron says, "You visitor; we have you eat first; you help yourself; we glad you come; we give you best we have."

Not unfrequently a considerable number gather in before you finish and you can hardly tell whether your supper, or the earnest, pleasant chatting absorbs you most. You may not understand their words but the beaming smiles and the hearty laughter and animated conversation warm your heart and draw you nearer to these dusky children of the forest. If you pass the night under the Indian's roof you may be sure of protection. No bolts or bars are on the doors, for they are open to the people of their tribe and to the stranger, day and night.

The Indian eats when he is hungry. It is only now and then that the family eat at regular intervals or together.

Food is set before, no matter how many, strangers and it is always expected of them that the usual "Hi-ne-a-weh," I *thank you*, will be said.

A favorite cake among the Senecas is made as follows:— A quantity of coarse meal is boiled in water until thoroughly cooked. Just before taken off, long black beans previously boiled until soft, are stirred in. The whole mass is poured while hot into a large tin pan and left to cool. When cool this cake is cut with a knife in slices and eaten with butter freely spread on. The beans present the appearance of fruit and detract not at all from the wholesomeness of the cake. This cake is given freely to the children, and it has this recommendation that it never yet distressed any one. It is by no means unpalatable as the writer well knows. The long beans at the bottom of the cake you take to be raisins, but a surprise awaits

you. You bite the cake and the surprise is that no taste of raisins is realized, and the Senecas laugh at your puzzled looks and tell you it is bean-corn-cake.

One writer, many years ago, speaking of the generosity of the Indian, said, "He would surrender his dinner to feed the hungry, vacate his bed to refresh the weary, and give up his apparel to cloth the naked. No test of friendship is too severe, no sacrifice to repay a favor, too great, no fidelity to an agreement, too inflexible for the Indian character." It is an estimate of Indian traits as just to-day as when uttered, and what return has the Indian had? A cutting criticism but fairly made, was that of the old chief on the treatment of the Indian at the hands of the whites, when he said to a guest, "You know our practice. If a white man, in traveling through our country, enters one of our cabins, we all treat him as I do you. We dry him if he is wet, we warm him if he is cold, and give him meat and drink that he may allay his hunger and thirst, and we spread soft furs for him to rest and sleep on. We ask nothing in return. But if I go into a white man's house, and ask for victuals and drink, they say 'Where is your money?' And if I have none, they say, '*Get out you Indian dog.*'"

There is much truth in reports of the indolence of the Indian men; they are not over-fond of labor, but many of them are diligent workers and have accumulated some property. Efforts one may put forth to help the Indian to the practice of diligence are not always appreciated as the following will show: One day in May the writer was making calls upon the Indians and observed three young men of about twenty-five years, plowing, or, to be more exact, the Indians lay in the shade of an apple-tree and the plow slept in the furrow, and the horses stood nodding. Returning an hour after there was no change of base. The thought occurred, "Here is a chance to give those lazy fellows a lesson they will not forget." So hitching the horse, he jumped the rail fence, took the reins, started the team and finished plowing the piece, then turning to the aggravatingly indifferent three as they lay, like Tityrus of whom Virgil has sung, "reclining beneath the branches of a wide-

spread tree," the following advice was volunteered: "Boys, if you want to get on in this world you must not spend much time in the shade," and the Indians delighted that the job was finished, cried out to know "if the missionary would not be kind enough to unhitch the team." He did unhitch his own and drive off at a high rate of speed, reflecting deeply on the doctrine of total depravity.

In all his dealings with his own people, or others, the Indian is not guilty of theft. He has too high a sense of honor and too great self-respect to steal. Theft is a crime almost unheard of among the Senecas. Let an Indian get drunk on the white man's fire-water and even then steal, and public indignation known no bounds.

Nor is the Indian a liar. Notwithstanding somewhat of degeneration from primitive truthfulness, the Senecas compare favorably in this respect, with most in their vicinity. Lying and dissimulation are not Indian traits. In fact, if an Indian attempts one or the other he uses the English language. He cannot use double speaking in his own language, it will not admit of it. It is a remarkably direct and simple language as will be shown in the chapter on the Seneca language.

The neighboring whites have some trouble in trading with the Indians, and complain bitterly that they do not keep their word and pay as they agree, when trusted for goods. The reason is obvious; the disability of minority is upon the tribes and they need not pay unless they choose, because the white man has no right to trust the Indian and cannot forcibly collect his debt.

A Christian Indian had owed a debt for a long time; after being dunned until he lost his patience he paid the debt, reminding the trader that he was "mean man" and "Indian needn't pay if he don't want to, but I pay you, I Christian, I pay. You mean man."

In the matter of holding property, the women are as independent of their own husbands as two men could be of each other among us. If they separated the woman took all her property with her. On the death of the wife all her effects go

to her children. As formerly the children were none of them members of the same tribe with the father, so at the present time no Indian and his wife belong to the same clan, and the children by birth are of the mother's clan.

In olden time the Indian might give his property to his wife and children, but failing to do this the next of kin in his own tribe were rightful heirs. The handling of property is left with the Indian Nation and the disposition of it is regulated by the councils.

The Indians have fashions in dress peculiarly their own. They are always in style for they have but one style. The majority of the women wear bright shawls or blankets thrown over the head and drawn about the face. This is their custom summer and winter. They wear leggings of navy blue broad cloth embroidered with beads, and a skirt of the same material, the list being left on as an ornamental stripe, and over all a polonaise of bright calico. Another article of apparel, worn by most of the women, is the over-dress. It is made with the straight yoke and is gathered on to the yoke full, hanging loosely. It has a broad collar which is fastened at the throat with a silver clasp. This over-dress is made of calico.

Not unfrequently the squaws wear a long strip of broad-cloth over their heads as a shawl. Only a few wear hats and dress in modern, American style.

Making maple sugar and sugaring-off are useful and favorite pastimes among the Senecas, and contribute much to social joy.

From earliest recollection corn has been the staple article of food. When properly prepared it affords hearty and nutritious diet. Red corn, white, and flint corn are the varieties. The white corn is the favorite kind, supplying the place of wheat. It is very white. The Indian women put it into mortars which are two feet high and with a pounder four feet long reduce the corn to meal as fine as they wish.

The moccason as made by the Senecas is ingeniously contrived and easy to the foot. Soft buckskin is the material mostly used. Some are high like a boot; others, low like a

slipper with a narrow lapel turned down from the top embroidered with beads.

Trays and sap tubs made of bark are in common use. The Indian still raises tobacco, but smokes sumac leaves with it to reduce its strength. Chewing is a habit copied from the white man.

An Indian saddle is of curious contrivance but answers well its purpose. It consists of a frame of wood covered with raw-hide. The side pieces are long. The pommel rises five or six inches above these on the front of the saddle. An opening of about three inches is left for the backbone of the horse at the top of the saddle between the side-pieces. The stirrups are also of wood bent into the form of a triangle.

The snow-shoe is much used in winter. A strip of hickory is bent, the front rounding, and the two ends fastened together at the heel. Coarse network of thongs of green-hide completes the shoe.

A contrivance sometimes used by the Senecas for igniting tinder is worthy of description. A rod four feet long is passed through a small, heavy wheel which is keyed to the rod or shaft. A notch like that at the end of an arrow is made at the top of the shaft. A bow is hung by its string upon this shaft. The string being loose you swing the bow around a few turns and then press down upon it; the shaft will begin to turn as the string uncoils and the wheel will give momentum. The harder you press on the bow the faster will the shaft revolve until the friction at the base will produce fire.

The Indian women excel in basket making. The material used is ash, rushes and corn husks.

Wooden sap ladles and bowls are often handsomely carved and are really beautiful. Wooden butter dishes, butter stamps of their own make and carving, and other home-made household utensels are common among the Senecas.

War-clubs and tomahawks are no longer used by these domesticated Indians, therefore a description of them would hardly be in place here. Now and then one of the fathers of

the tribe will take down an old tomahawk and tell its history; in what skirmishes with the whites it was used when the bad spirits of the Indian nature were aroused; how it was carried on the long trails by some distinguished warrior. But the spirit of war has left the Seneca and the dove of peace now hovers over the tribe. This little nation of seventeen hundred Senecas, at peace with other tribes, and in harmony at home, is a delightful study, whether contemplated from the standpoint of its legends, customs, or social life.



## CHAPTER IX.

### LEGENDS.

In legendary lore the Seneca goes back to first causes, explaining, with a minuteness quite remarkable, all striking phenomena in nature. Is there a valley or mountain at all peculiar? Is the undulation of the surface anywhere peculiarly striking? The Seneca tells the reason of such peculiarity, suffering no marked feature of land or sky to pass unexplained. The scientist says that the long cut from Niagara's cataract to lake Ontario was eaten out by frost and falling waters, but the Indian who roamed the forest years before the scientist was born, and oughtn't he to know? tells us a very different story. The scientist declares it his opinion that the soft rock underneath the bend at Horse-shoe Fall crumbling away, affords too weak a prop for the mighty waters; but the Seneca gives all the particulars, and his word, therefore, should have precedence.

The legend is, that a beautiful Indian maiden was bound by some law to marry an ugly, wrinkled uncouth Indian. The contract had been ratified, and there was no possible escape for her. So just before the day that they, by the custom of the tribe, were to be bound as one, she sprang into a bark canoe and pushed it far out on the shooting waters of Niagara. Down, down the angry rapids, and over the surging sea of falling waters sped the canoe with its fair freight. The patron deity of the harvest, the "cloud-compelling," and "rain-giving" Heno, dwelt in the cave behind the falls. He saw the maiden falling and flew out—for he had massive wings—and caught her ere she struck the rocks below. She dwelt for months in the home of Heno. While there she learned of Heno many

things strange and entirely new to her. He told her what she and her tribe had longed for years to know, why it was that her people suffered every spring from the inroads of a fearful pestilence. He said that a serpent was the cause; that this serpent had his slimy haunts under the village and that he poisoned the waters of the streams that the Indians might be destroyed in great numbers for he fed on the bodies of the dead, and such was his appetite that death by natural causes did not supply his need.

Heno plumed his wings and bore the Indian maiden to her home. By his advice she told her people the cause of their suffering and death; that they must leave their present hunting-grounds and villages and travel farther towards the lake.

The serpent, disappointed of his feast, coiled up in sullen mood, but at last he made up his mind what to do. He would go in search of the food. So he ventured forth to learn the cause of the lack of bodies. He found that the Indians had sought another home, and, pressed with hunger, he dragged forth his slimy coils, and glided noiselessly after the departing people. While crawling up a narrow creek, Heno, who had been watching him, believing this to be the favored opportunity took a small thunderbolt from his pouch in which he carried large numbers of them, and hurled it at the serpent. The shores and hills along the great lake reverberated with the terrific explosion. A terrible conflict ensued. Heno had hurled a small bolt first because he did not wish to deafen the deer in the wood and the fish in the lake, and he thought it would slay the serpent. He saw his mistake and hurled a heavier bolt, but this did not kill the serpent. Heno became alarmed. It seemed almost as if all the thunderbolts he had would not be sufficient. But finally the serpent was slain.

The monster's body stretched more than a mile, and, when he brought his tail around in the agonies of death, he swept up great hills of sand. When the serpent floated down Niagara it appeared that a huge mountain were afloat. The monster lodged at the very brink of the falls and being obstructed by a rock, piled the waters mountain-high. Then the ledge

gave way behind the serpent's body which stretched from bank to bank, and thus was formed the horse-shoe winding of the falls. This is the legend of the Senecas.

#### THE HUNGRY PAIR.

One winter a hunting party met with sore misfortune. They could find no game save now and then a squirrel or a porcupine. Hunger stared them in the face, and what to do they knew not. In solemn council it was agreed that whenever any game was taken it should be given up for the good of all. One Indian killed a squirrel, and of this a soup was made, nine hundred ninety-nine parts water, one, of meat. The starving people were very glad of even this. One young Indian, who had just married, killed a porcupine, and, as his wife was very hungry, he cooked the meat and gave the most of it to her. Some quills of the porcupine attracted the attention of the other Indians, and they searched the matter out. A council was held and they decreed that, while they admired his devotion to his wife, they thought it best that he who had broken the covenant be punished, and they also thought that his wife should suffer for taking the food when she knew that so many of the party were starving. So the Indians poured water on the fires and extinguished every spark.

The young Indian and his wife were now deserted by the rest and left to die. It was very cold weather and they had nothing to eat and very little to wear, their cruel people having carried everything away.

Thus they were left alone with nothing but a rusty knife which Ska-no-wun-de, (*over the creek,*) had concealed in a hole when the heartless Indians put the fires out. What should they do to drive away the cold? Ska-no-wun-de was equal to the emergency. He could not, would not, see her suffer from either cold or hunger whom he had taken for his wife. He rubbed two pieces of dry wood together, and struck a spark, and fanned it to a flame. Both piled on wood, and soon they had comfortable quarters. With the rusty knife they managed to complete a strong bow and several arrows. Ska-no-wun-de

found deer in plenty and they prospered. Meanwhile the party that had left them cruelly to die encountered every hardship. None of them could find game.

Ha-wen-ne-yu punished them for their wickedness. Many starved to death. The father and mother of Ska-no-wun-de were among those who thought the young Indian and his wife should be left to die. They were very old people and great eaters. They fell to devouring the other Indians, eating them one by one until they had disposed of the whole company of thirty, and even then they were not satisfied. They said, "We will go back to where our children are, and we will feed on them, they must be frozen hard."

Before the old people started on their search for the bodies of their son and daughter, the young Indians had a revelation of everything the old folks meant to do, and some voice kept saying to them, "Do not for one moment trust the word of the Indians, they mean no good to you."

The young Indians traveled on farther into the forest until they came upon a charming lake. The sun was shining, and, though the ice had grown thick on the bosom of the lake, the sun in sympathy for them said, "Build a canoe. The old folks are coming. They will be here in two days. I will melt the ice when they come, and bring the water back, and you sailing on the lake shall have security from your pursuers."

When the old folks reached the spot where they had helped put out the camp fires they found venison in plenty hanging from the tree. Having eaten this, they searched and found their children's tracks.

Meanwhile the canoe was building, and just as the old folks came in sight, Ska-no-wun-de pushed out the canoe containing his wife, bear's meat, deer and porcupines. When the old folks, lean and hungry still, saw them they hurried to the water's edge and cried, "O let us in! we are tired out. Your old father and mother are very weak. They are weary of their sorrowful life. Let us go in the canoe with you."

The sun whispered to the young Indians, saying, "Do not heed them. I know they are your father and mother, but

they will destroy you both for they are great eaters and very hungry." The canoe was paddled farther away, and the old Indians waded out neck-deep, and, suddenly, a huge turtle snapped at the old man's heel and pulled him under and dragged him to his gloomy home in the mud; then hastening back he caught the old woman too, and dragged her down, and all creation said it was just retribution.

The young Indians now paddled back to the shore and after long days and many moons they reached the valley whence they had gone with the hunting party, and, sitting by the council fire of the tribe they told the story of the unfortunate hunting expedition.

## CHAPTER X.

### ADORATION OF THE MAPLE, AND OTHER FESTIVALS.

The Seneca shows his gratitude for kindnesses bestowed upon him whether they come from friends or flow from trees. Whatever adds to his pleasure or contributes to his happiness calls out expressions of thankfulness. An Indian never forgets an injury, and he never forgets a benefit.

As the maple is the first substantial blessing after the long winter, so the maple thanksgiving precedes all others in the year if we except the general thanksgiving of February.

Prior to every festival the people hold a meeting and confess their sins. The sweet sap from the maple is regarded as a special blessing and when it begins to flow, a day is appointed for the maple festival. Everybody used to confess during this festival. In the forenoon the Indians partake of a feast and play the games common to the tribe. They next assemble in council and speeches are made by the moral teachers. We give one of the speeches:

“Friends and relatives:—The sun, the ruler of the day, is high in his path, and we must hasten to do our duty. We are gathered here to observe an ancient custom. It is an institution handed down to us by our forefathers. It was given to them by the Great Spirit. He has ever required his people to give thanks to him for all blessings received. Our people have always tried to be faithful in doing this. The season when the maple tree yields its sweet waters has again returned. We give thanks that it is so. We expect you all to join in thanksgiving to the maple. We expect you to join also in thanksgiving to the Great Spirit who made this tree for the good of all.

“Friends and relatives, continue to listen:—We are glad to see so many here and we give you thanks that you think well of this matter. We give thanks to the Great Spirit for being so kind to us. He spares our lives to participate in these festivities. *Naho.*” (*I have done.*)

This is the regular speech year after year. Other speeches of a general character follow, and full of sound advice. It is a marvel that so high a standard of right is planted in the conscience of the Indian.

One other speaker addresses the people somewhat as follows:

“My nephews, listen:—The Great Spirit has given us the maple tree; he has made the sweet sap to flow and he expects that we shall live in harmony. He gives us all things. We should always live in peace. If we hurt our neighbor with evil speaking he will know it. When the hungry come to our door we are not to turn them away. The Great Spirit feeds us; he gives us everything and he will be displeased if we turn the hungry away. If we do this he will punish us; he will take away our crops and we shall go hungry.

“Continue to listen:—If one does wrong do not treat him harshly, be kind to him and the Great Spirit will reward you. Do not let your brother become your enemy. Do not stir up revenge for it will never sleep again. The Great Spirit gives you a path to walk in; continue in it and you will not have trouble.”

This part of the ceremony finished, the dance follows. It is not a promiscuous round dance, nor is it a waltz, but a rhythmic stepping to vocal music.

The religious speeches are concluded at noon. It has ever been held by the Indians that the forenoon belongs to the Great Spirit, and that the afternoon is dedicated to the spirits of the dead, hence no speeches are made in the after part of the day. Meetings are held several times a year by the Pagan Indians and the high priest makes a speech twelve hours long! devoting three hours each of the forenoons of four days to the accomplishment of his task. He repeats, but only that what

he says may be indelibly stamped on the memory of his hearers.

The next festival of the season is the Planting festival. Its object is to give thanks to the Great Spirit for the return of the planting season and to seek his blessing upon the seed and the soil that there may be an abundant harvest.

It is quite remarkable that so pure a religious vein runs through the Indian character; but the Indian, as we know him in Western New York, is religious, and in his endeavors to follow the light of natural religion which has, until a comparatively recent day, been his only light, he has done as well, we believe, as any race could have done walking in the obscure twilight of morality among pitfalls innumerable. The Quaker first bore to this people the blazing light of revealed religion, and the tribe has reason to revere the memory of those sainted Friends from the City of Brotherly Love who transplanted to this uncultivated soil the hardy yet subduing plants of Christian graces, whose fragrance is a balm of joy to scores of these dusky people and a blessing to the entire tribe.

At the planting festival tobacco is sprinkled upon the fire and through the medium of the smoke communication is thought to be had with the realms above.

As the tobacco burns the following prayer is said:—"Great Spirit, listen now to the words of thy people. The smoke of our offering arises. Kindly listen to our prayers as they arise to thee in the smoke. We give thanks to thee for the return of the planting season. Give to us a favorable season that our crops may be abundant. Continue to listen, for the smoke still arises. Preserve us from diseases. May no pestilence breathe upon us. Give us strength. Take care of our old men and of our little ones. Help us to feel what we say and faithfully to perform these ceremonies. Guide the minds of thy people that they may remember thee in all they do. *Naho.*"

If there should come a drouth, a fire would be kindled and tobacco be sprinkled on it, and in the incense of the burning leaves a prayer be borne up to Heno the custodian of



thunderbolts. He is importuned to send rain and prevent famine. The keeper of the faith continues to sprinkle tobacco leaves on the fire and a prayer is made to the Great Spirit. It is the idea of the Indian that if the crop is threatened Hah-wen-ne-yu is displeased and so they confess and beseech that Heno may receive orders to send rain. A dance follows this invocation.

The Strawberry festival is the next in order. The berry growing wild in vast abundance furnishes the first and by no means the least valuable delicacy to the Indian. This festival closes with the usual ceremonies and a strawberry feast.

The Blueberry or Wortleberry festival is held in grateful acknowledgement of the first gift of the trees or bushes.

The next is the Green Corn festival. It lasts three days and is made a thanksgiving of considerable importance. It is a time of great rejoicing because corn is the Indian's staff of life and when his crop is assured his joy is full. There is a beautiful legend that the corn plant sprang from the bosom of the mother of the Great Spirit after she was buried; that she called the Indians her children, and, cherishing in her heart good-will to her children, when she died her good-will sprang forth in the form of a plant and from this the Indians were fed.

The Green Corn festival is introduced with congratulatory speeches. The feather dance follows, then the regular thanksgiving address, during which tobacco is freely sprinkled on the fire. There are numerous inferior dances subsequent to the other religious ceremonies.

Games and feasting close the festivities of the first day. The second day is given to speech-making and dancing the thanksgiving dance. The feather dance and thanksgiving dance do not differ materially; the latter is interrupted at frequent intervals by thanksgiving speeches.

Vocal music with the accompaniment of a rattle is the only kind furnished the dancers on these occasions, and it is not too much to say that the Senecas are the most wonderful singers anywhere to be found. Their voices are clear and sweet;

they take special delight in minor strains, and render with great skill most difficult music. The degree of perfection to which the Indians arrive in cultivation of the voice in singing is remarkable. One of the most practiced musicians in Western New York is Mr. A. Sim Logan. With a voice of great compass and a perfectly cultivated taste, his rendering of difficult music is the delight of all. As a cornetist he is unsurpassed; a progressive, wide-awake, educated Seneca.

A company in costume begin the Green Corn dance and in about two or three minutes the music ceases and a speaker says, "We give thanks to the maple." The dance is resumed and in a moment ceases, while another speaker returns thanks to the bushes and trees. Thus they review at intervals all the benefits of the season spicing well the speeches with the dance. On the third day all the people join in chorus of praise, and thanks are returned for all material benefits, for kindnesses shown them by others, for all advantages, both public and private, enjoyed by the tribe. The whole of the third day is given to singing the gratitude of the people. Individuals also give thanks personally to all by whom they have been aided.

The succotash feast which follows would gratify the veriest epicure. The Indians, of all people, know best how to secure a "divine blending of flavors" in the preparation of succotash. The Indians have ever been accustomed to ask a blessing on their feast. One of the "keepers of the faith," pitching his voice on a high shrill key, sends forth an indescribable sound and at its close all the people join in chorus. Thus do they say grace.

The last in our list of festivals is the Harvest gathering. The Senecas regard corn, squashes and beans as nature's great beneficent trinity. Three good spirits are associated with these products, and in expressing thanks to these they return gratitude to Ha-wen-ne-yu.

We have said that the Indians of Western New York are a religious people. A review of these ceremonies will confirm the truth of the statement. The Indian enters heartily into

his forms of worship and clings tenaciously to his belief. It would be resented by average white folks if they were told that in some respects the Indians are their equals, but you could no sooner succeed in attempts at proselyting an Indian of one Protestant denomination over to another than you could speak a tree up by its roots.

The Senecas account their festivals as the oases in the desert; they are the green spots in their life and in no half-hearted way do they engage in them. The recurrence of the festival seasons is a delight to the Indian and he enters with all the ardor of his being into the performance of the old-time sacred rights. *rites.*

Approach the Indian with a religious subject and you are at once aware that you converse with one that takes naturally and kindly to your theme, for he is a religious being. He makes a religion of almost everything; less hurtful and dangerous this, than to make religion of nothing.

As at certain periods of the world's history, great reformers have sprung up revolutionizing the world, so the Senecas have had reformers, men, not one whit less sincere and influential among the tribes than our great reformers have been among us. Eighty years ago a reformer arose among the Senecas who, while assuming much that smacked of imposture, displayed marvelous wisdom. His name was Handsome Lake. He claimed to have received his words from the Great Spirit. We subjoin a portion of his speech as written out thirty years ago by Sose-ha-wa:

"The four messengers (i. e., the angels) said further to Handsome Lake:—Tell your people, and in particular, the keepers of the faith, to be strong-minded, and adhere to the true faith. We fear the Evil-minded will go among them with temptations. He may introduce the fiddle. He may bring cards, and leave them among you. The use of these is a great sin. Let the people be on their guard and the keepers of the faith be watchful and vigilant, that none of these evils may find their way among the people. Let the keepers of the faith preserve the law of moral conduct in all its purity. When

meetings are to be held for instruction, and the people are preparing to go, the Evil-minded is then busy. He goes from one to another, whispering many temptations by which to keep them away. He will even follow persons into the door of the council, and induce some, at that time, to bend their steps away. Many resist until they have entered, and then leave it. This habit, once indulged, obtains a fast hold, and the evil propensity increases with age. This is a great sin and should be at once abandoned. Thus they said. Speak evil of none. If you can say no good of a person, then be silent. Let not your tongues betray you into evil. Let all be mindful of this; for these are the words of our Creator. Let all strive to cultivate friendship with those who surround them. This is pleasing to the Great Spirit."

On the following day the speech was continued as follows: "Friends and Relatives, uncover now your heads; continue to listen to my rehearsal of the sayings communicated to Handsome Lake by the four messengers of the Great Spirit. We have met again around the council fire. We have followed the ancient custom of greeting each other. This is right and pleasing to our Maker. He now looks down upon this assembly. He sees us all. He is informed of the cause of our gathering and it is pleasing to him. Life is uncertain. While we live let us love each other. Let us sympathize always with the suffering and needy. Let us also always rejoice with those who are glad. This is now the third day, and my time for speaking to you is drawing to a close. Many moons and seasons will pass ere the sacred council-brand shall be again uncovered. Be watchful, therefore, and remember faithfully what you may now hear. Many of you may be ignorant of the Spirit of Medicine. It watches over all constantly, and assists the needy whenever it is required to do so. The Great Spirit designed that some men should possess the gift of skill in medicine. But he is pained to see a medicine man making exorbitant charges for attending the sick. When a sick person recovers his health, he must return his thanks to the Great Spirit by means of tobacco; for it is by his goodness that

he is made well. He blesses the medicine, and the medicine man must receive as his reward whatever the gratitude of the restored may tender. This is right and proper. Many are unfortunate and cannot pay for attendance. It is sufficient for such to return thanks to the medicine man upon recovery. The remembrance that he has saved the life of a relative will be a sufficient reward. Listen further to what the Great Spirit has told us. He has made us a race, separate and distinct from the pale-face. It is a great sin to intermarry, and intermingle the blood of the two races. Let none be guilty of this transgression. At one time the four messengers said to Handsome Lake, lest the people should disbelieve you, and not repent and forsake their evil ways, we will now disclose to you the House of Torment, the dwelling of the Evil-minded. Handsome Lake was particular in describing to us all that he witnessed; and the course which departed spirits were accustomed to take on leaving the earth. There was a road which led upward. At a certain point it branched; one branch led straight forward to the home of the Great Spirit, and the other turned aside to the House of Torment. At the place where the roads separated were stationed two keepers, one representing the Good and the other the Evil Spirit. When a person reached the fork, if wicked, by a motion from the evil keeper, he turned upon the road which led to the abode of the Evil-minded. But if virtuous and good, the other keeper directed him upon the straight road. The latter was not much traveled; while the former was so frequently trodden, that no grass could grow in the pathway. It sometimes happened that the keepers had great difficulty in deciding which path the person ought to take, when the good and bad actions of the individual were nearly balanced. But it was decided that if they had committed any sin they should go to the House of Torment to remain one day, (which is there one of our years,) some for a month. After they have atoned for their sins, they pass to heaven. When they have committed one of the great sins—witchcraft, murder and infanticide—they never pass to heaven but are tormented forever.

“Having conducted Handsome Lake to this place, he saw large and dark colored mansion covered with soot. One of the four then held out his rod, and the top of the house moved up, until they could look down upon all that was within. He saw many rooms. The first object that met his eye was a haggard-looking man; his sunken eyes cast upon the ground, and his form half consumed by the torments he had suffered. This man was a drunkard. The Evil-minded then appeared and called him by name. As the man obeyed the call he dipped from a caldron a quantity of red-hot liquid, and commanded him to drink it, as it was a drink he loved. The man did as he was told, and immediately a stream of fire issued from his mouth. He cried for help, but there was no help for him. The Tormentor then told him to sing and make merry as he was accustomed to do while on earth when he had drank the fire-water. Let all drunkards be warned by this.

“Others were summoned. There came before him two persons, who appeared to be husband and wife. He told them to do what they had always done on earth. They commenced to quarrel. They raged so at each other, that their tongues and eyes ran out so far that they could neither see nor speak. “This,” said they, “is the punishment of quarrelsome and disputing husbands and wives.” Let such also be warned, and live in peace.

“Next he called up a woman who had been a witch. First he plunged her into a caldron of boiling liquid. In her cries of distress, she begged the Evil-minded to give her a cooler place. He then plunged her into a freezing-cold liquid. Then she cried because she was too cold. “This woman,” said the four Messengers, “shall always be tormented in this manner.”

“The Evil-minded next called up a man who had been in the habit of beating his wife. Having led him up to a red-hot statue of a woman he told him to do what he had always done while on earth. He obeyed, and began to strike the statue. The sparks fell in showers, and the arm that struck her was totally consumed. Such is the punishment awaiting all those who beat their wives.

“He looked again and saw a woman, whose arms and hands were nothing but bones. She had sold fire-water to the Indians, and the flesh was eaten from her hands and arms. This would be the fate of all rumsellers.

“Again he looked, and in one apartment he saw one who had been a friend to him on earth. He was removing a heap of sand a grain at a time, and, although he had labored for years at it, the heap was no smaller. This is the punishment of those Indians who sell their land. Near by was a field of corn filled with weeds. He saw women trying to cut them down, but as fast as they did this the weeds grew up again. This is the punishment of lazy women. [There seems to have been no provision for lazy men.]

The speaker continues, “Many of our people live to a very old age. Your Creator says that you must treat them with reverence and affection. They have seen and felt much of the pain and misery of earth. Be kind to them when old and helpless. Wash their hands and face, and nurse them with care. This is the will of Ha-wen-ne-yu.

“At another time the four Messengers said to Handsome Lake, they would now show to him Washington, (the Destroyer of Villages, as his Indian name signifies.) Upon the road leading to heaven he could see a light, far away in the distance, moving to and fro. Its brightness far exceeded the brilliancy of the noonday sun. They said the journey was as follows: First, they came to a cold spring. Here was a resting place. From here they proceeded into pleasant, fairy grounds, which spread out in every direction. Soon they reached heaven. The light was dazzling. Berries of every description grew in plenty, a single one of them satisfied hunger. Sweet fragrance was in the air. Fruits were hanging everywhere. The inhabitants of this celestial land spent their time in most pleasing occupation and repose. No evil could enter there. None there could ever commit sin. Families were united and harmonious. The people had bodily form, the senses, and the remembrance of the earthly life. No white man ever entered heaven. He looked and saw an inclosure

upon a plain, just without the entrance of heaven. Within it was a fort. Here he saw Washington walking to and fro within the inclosure. His countenance indicated a great and good man. This was the only pale-face who ever left the earth. He was kind to you, when on the settlement of the great difficulty between the Americans and the Great Crown, you were abandoned to the mercy of your enemies. The Crown told the great American, that as for his allies, the Indians, he might kill them if he liked. The great American judged that this would be cruel and unjust. He believed that they were made by the Great Spirit, and were entitled to the enjoyments of life. He was kind to you and extended over you his protection. For this reason he has been allowed to leave the earth. But he is never permitted to go into the presence of the Great Spirit. Although alone, he is perfectly happy. All faithful Indians pass by him as they go to heaven. They see him and recognize him, but pass on in silence. No word ever passes his lips.

Friends and relatives, it was by the influence of this great man, that we were spared as a people, and yet live. Had he not granted us his protection, where would we have been? Perished, all perished.

“The four Messengers further said to Handsome Lake, they were fearful that, unless the people repented and obeyed his commands, the patience and forbearance of their Creator would be exhausted; that he would be angry with them, and cause their increase to fail.

“Our Creator made light and darkness. He made the sun to heat and shine over the world. He made the moon, also, to shine by night, and to cool the world, if the sun made it too hot by day. Heno, by direction of the Great Spirit, will then cease to act. The keeper of the springs and running brooks will cease to rule them for the good of man. The sun will cease to fulfil its office. Total darkness will then cover the earth. A great smoke will rise, and spread over the face of the earth. Then will come out of it all monsters, and poisonous animals created by the Evil-minded, and they, with the wicked upon the earth, will perish together.



But before this dreadful time shall come, the Great Spirit will take home to himself all the good and faithful. They will lay themselves down to sleep and from this sleep of death, they will rise and go home to their Creator. Thus they said.

“Remember and understand the fate which awaits the earth, and the unfaithful and unbelieving. Our Creator looks down upon us. The four Angels from above see us. They are pleased to witness this gathering. I have done. May the Great Spirit, who rules all things, watch over and protect you from every harm and danger, while you travel the journey of life. May the blessing of the Great Spirit rest upon you all, and bestow upon you life, health, peace and prosperity, and may you all make return to him for his great goodness. *Naho.*”

The foregoing speech is repeated every year even at the present time substantially as given. Extended fragments have been taken down for the use of the writer, by Indian interpreters, but we have given the speech as translated by an eminent Indian several years ago. The speech bears evidence of a master mind and represents that peculiar eloquence for which the Senecas are distinguished. It reveals, also, the charming simplicity of Indian life, their trust and faith in the Great Spirit, and jealous regard for old customs. Christian missionaries throw no obstacles in the way of such teaching, but seek to lead the Indians to that true and only source of abiding integrity, the religion of the Bible; happy if such teaching as the great reformer inculcated become the standard of Indian morals. This speech is to be commended to the attention of the white race everywhere. No little toil will be required of the “stronger race” even, to scale the heights of virtue thus portrayed by an untutored Seneca.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE SENECA LANGUAGE.

The Seneca language is one of some regularity although not a written language.

Attempts have been made, and with very considerable success, to represent the sounds by English letters. It is necessary, however, to employ certain unusual markings, the meaning of which has to be explained to the Indians.

The letter *a* ending a syllable often has a strong nasal tone accompanying it; this nasal sound is represented by a hyphen immediately under the *a*. *A* standing alone or without marking has the sound of *ar*; with the nasal marking, it has the sound of *arng*. *A* with the circumflex accent over it and the hyphen under it makes a high grunt, the *a* being sounded as *a* in *hat*. The letter *e* is pronounced *ay*; the letter *i* is pronounced *ee*. *O* with the hyphen under it is a deep nasal. Every letter is sounded. The Senecas have no such primary sounds as we would represent by the letters B, F, L, M, P, Q, R, V, X, Z. The alphabet, therefore, of the Seneca language is as follows: A, C, D, E, G, H, I, J, K, N, O, S, T, U, W, Y. In the translation of a proper name into the Indian, the word is incorporated without change. The Indian makes no use of the lips in pronunciation, and the labials are wanting in his dialect. About twenty-eight elementary sounds are distinguishable in the language.

Every language suffers loss from the wear and tear of use] Time changes language and wears out some forms just as it wears out shingles on the roof of a house. In thirty years the Seneca language has felt the abrasion of time. Many old forms have died; some new ones have sprung to life as the language

has felt the refining touch of civilization. Formerly the word for Day was spelled An-da now it is spelled An-dah. The word for Dog was spelled Je-yah, now spelled Ga-yeh. The word for wind was spelled Ga-o, now Ga-oh. The great majority of Seneca words have three and four syllables as will be noticed in specimens which we will give.

The language has three numbers; the Singular, the Dual and the Plural. They distinguish the Dual and Plural in this way: You can say, *All three* birds sat on a tree, but not *all two* birds sat on a tree. This difficulty seems to have given rise to the Dual.

The nouns are inflected to convey the idea of plurality. There is some regularity in the inflection. The word Ge-da-o means, *a bird*; the plural form is Ge-da-o-suh-uh, *birds*. Ga-ne-o-wa-o means *a brook*; the plural is Ga-ne-o-wa-o-ne-o, very like the flowing of waters, as the frequent repetition of the word will prove. The word Ga-hun-da means *a creek*. Ga-hun-da-ne-o means *creeks*.

The numerals above twenty are formed very similarly to those of the Latin.

The Seneca, to express difference of gender makes use of different words; he cannot designate gender by terminations as is done in the Latin and Greek. There are three genders in Seneca. Masculine, Feminine and Neuter. The Neuter includes all inanimate objects, and is almost the most important gender of the three. In their declension of nouns there is a curious state of things. Although not reducible to a regular paradigm, the declensions in Seneca are vastly more numerous than in the Latin. One great difficulty in learning the language is, the almost infinite diversity of cases. We give a few phrases showing how this may be. Take the word *man*. Every relation in which you place the word demands a separate case. *Of a man, to a man, with a man, after a man, above a man, belonging to a man, at a man's house, man at my house, and so on; an of-case, a to-case, a with-case, an after-case, an above-case, a belonging-to-case, an at-case, &c.*

Adjectives are numerous. The Indians have three de-

grees of comparison. In comparison, adjectives are not changed; words are added. Good is compared as follows:

Good,	Better good.	Best Good.
We-yoh	Ah-gwas-we-yoh.	Ha-yo-go-sote-we-yoh.

Take the adjective white, Ga-geh-ant.

White.	Better white or whiter	Best white or whitest.
Ga-geh-ant.	Ah-gwus-ga-geh-ant.	Ha-yo-go-sote-ga-geh-ant.

The article *a* or *an* does not appear in the language, but *the* is frequent. Adverbs are numerous. Since the Seneca dialect is one of ejaculations, interjections abound. Prepositions are wanting; and the attempts of an Indian to handle in his own language many expressions occurring in our own are ludicrous in the extreme.

The Seneca language has remarkable harmony with constitutional weariness; there are times when the Indian shows excitement and by the free use of ejaculations gives vent to his feelings. In order to swear, the Indian learns a few set phrases from the white man and when angry blazes away with terrific fury. But to our subject:

We have made no mention of the verbs. According to the Indian a noun is a lifeless thing, like a tomahawk, but a verb is like the tomahawk impelled by the vigor of the arm. The noun is the instrument; the verb, the instrument with force applied. The noun does nothing; the verb executes, therefore is a living thing.

Expression of thought is direct. The language is not adapted to insinuation or double speaking. It is a matter-of-fact language. The Indian is serious minded. His is not a language for punning. If he wishes to perpetrate a joke, he does it directly. He cannot do it in any way but point-blank. Most other languages admit of a play of words. Take a case in point; the words *valui* and *volui* in the Latin. We remember to have heard the venerable Dr. Soule who was principal of Phillips Exeter Academy for upwards of forty years, say, speaking to the class on this very subject, that in the palmy days of Dr. Abbott, his predecessor, it was customary for the boys to speak the Latin language when conversing with the

Principal. If absent from church on Sunday the monitors reported the fact, and an excuse in Latin was demanded of the absentees. If sick, the delinquent would say "*Non volui.*" *I was not well.* Now it occurred to some that this word might be confounded with *volui* so as to let off those who were absent for other causes. *Non volui, I was not willing,* with a slight modification of the sound of *o* might pass for *non volui.*

It did pass for some months, the Dr.—and no man would deliberately tell him a lie such was the respect for him—not detecting the turn given. Unfortunately, one, less adroit than his companions, confused, in the Doctor's presence, blundered and said "non volui," exposing the trick.

The Seneca language admits of no such play of words; and if one lie in the Seneca he does so without any qualifications whatever. No such thing as a white lie is known. With this people all lies are black.

It would not be an insurmountable task to prepare a complete grammar of the Seneca language.

The conjugation of verbs may be matter of interest and we subjoin the forms of the verb, Ga-ta-i-neh, "I go."

#### INDICATIVE MOOD.

##### PRESENT TENSE. *I go.*

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Dual</i>
1 Ga ta i neh	1 A gwah da dyo eeh	1 Agyat ta i neh
2 Iis sata i neh	2 Iis kuh swah da dyo eeh	2 Jat ha i neh
3 Hata i neh	3 Ga gwa goh ha noh da dyo eeh	3 Yat ha i neh

##### IMPERFECT TENSE, *I was going.*

1 Yah da dyo eeh	1 Ga gwe goh a gwa ta i neh	1 Agyah da dyo eeh
2 Sah da dyo eeh	2 Ga gwe goh swatha i neh	2 Iis kuh a jah da dyo eeh
3 Ha da dyo eeh	3 Ga gwe goh haa noh ta i neh	3 Yah da dyo eeh

##### FUTURE TENSE, *I shall, or will go.*

1 A gah da dih	1 Ga gwe goh a dwah da dih	1 A dyah da dih
2 Iis ah sah da dih	2 Ga gwe goh a swah da dih	2 Iis kuh a jah da dih
3 Neh aoh da dih	3 Ga gwe goh aa noh da dih	3 Neh kuh a yah da dih

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Singular</i></p> <p>PERFECT TENSE, <i>I have gone, I did go.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Plural</i></p> <p>1 O gwah da dyo noh 2 Tha dah ah gah da dyo 3 Tha dah sah da dyo 3 Tha dah hoh da dyo</p> <p>1 O neh chi wa gah da dyo 2 O neh chi sah da dyo 3 O neh chi oh da dyo</p> <p>1 A wa gah da dyo gih shah 2 A e sah da dyo gih shah 3 A o da dyo gih shah</p> <p>1 Dya gwah a gah da dih 2 Dya gwah ah sah da dih 3 Dya gwah a ah da dih</p> <p>1 O gwe nyo ga ta i neh 2 O gwe nyo is sa ta i neh 3 O gwe nyo ha ta i neh</p> <p>1 Dya gwah sho ga ta i neh 2 Dya gwah sho is sa ta i neh 3 Dya gwah sho ha ta i neh</p> <p>1 A wa gah da dyook gih shah 2 A sah da dyook gih shah 3 A oh da dyook gih shah</p> <p>The Pluperfect of this Mood does not occur in the Seneca.</p> <p>3 Sa da dih, <i>Go thou</i> 3 Ha da dih, <i>Let him go</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Dual</i></p> <p>PERFECT TENSE, <i>I have gone, I did go.</i></p> <p>1 O gwah da dyo noh 2 Ho noh da dyo noh 3 Ga gwe goh gwa ho noh da dyo noh</p> <p>PLUPERFECT TENSE, <i>I had gone.</i></p> <p>1 O neh chi yo gwah da dyo 2 O neh chi swah da dyo 3 O neh ga gwa goh chi yo gwah da dyo</p> <p>FUTURE PERFECT TENSE, <i>I shall have gone.</i></p> <p>1 A yo gwah da dyo gih shah 2 A e swah da dyo gih shah 3 Do got ga gwe goh a yo gwah da dyo</p> <p>(English) SUBJUNCTIVE, (Latin, Subjunctive of Condition.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRESENT TENSE, <i>If I go.</i></p> <p>1 Dya gwah a dwah da dih 2 Dya gwah a swah da dih 3 Dya gwah ga gwe goh a dwah da dih</p> <p>(English) POTENTIAL, (Latin Subjunctive.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRESENT TENSE, <i>I may go.</i></p> <p>1 O gwe nyo a gwah da dyo eeh 2 O gwe nyo is kuh swah da dyo eeh 3 O gwe nyo ga gwa goh ha noh da dyo eeh</p> <p>IMPERFECT TENSE, <i>I might go.</i></p> <p>1 Dya gwah sho a gwah da dyo eeh 2 Dya gwah sho is kuh swah da dyo eeh 3 Dya gwah sho ga gwa goh ha noh da dyo eeh</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PERFECT TENSE, <i>I may have gone.</i></p> <p>1 A yoh gwah da dyook gih shah 2 Ah swah da dyook gih shah 3 Ga gwa goh gih shah a yoh gwah da dyook</p> <p>The Pluperfect of this Mood does not occur in the Seneca.</p> <p>3 Sa da dih, <i>Go thou</i> 3 Ha da dih, <i>Let them go</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Dual</i></p> <p>PERFECT TENSE, <i>I have gone, I did go.</i></p> <p>1 O gwah da dyo noh 2 Is kuh jah da dyo noh 3 Nel kuh ho noh da dyo noh</p> <p>1 O neh chi yo gwah da dyo 2 O neh chi nyah da dyo 3 O neh chi o noh da dyo</p> <p>1 A yo gwah da dyo gih shah 2 A e jah da dyo gih shah 3 A o noh da dyo gih shah.</p> <p>(English) SUBJUNCTIVE, (Latin, Subjunctive of Condition.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRESENT TENSE, <i>If I go.</i></p> <p>1 Dya gwah a ya gwah da dih 2 Dya gwah a jah da dih 3 Dya gwah a yah da dih</p> <p>(English) POTENTIAL, (Latin Subjunctive.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRESENT TENSE, <i>I may go.</i></p> <p>1 O gwe nyo a gyat ta i neh 2 O gwe nyo jat ha i neh 3 O gwe nyo yat ha i neh</p> <p>IMPERFECT TENSE, <i>I might go.</i></p> <p>1 Dya gwah sho a gyat ta i neh 2 Dya gwah sho jat ha i neh 3 Dya gwah sho yat ha i neh</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PERFECT TENSE, <i>I may have gone.</i></p> <p>1 A yoh gwah da dyook gih shah 2 A jah da dyook gih shah 3 A o noh da dyook gih shah</p> <p>The Pluperfect of this Mood does not occur in the Seneca.</p> <p>3 Jah da dih, <i>Go ye two</i> 3 Yah da dih, <i>Let them two go</i></p>
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There is no Infinitive Mood. If the Senecas wish to say "I intend to go away," they really say "That I may go away is lodged in my mind."

Their distinctions in gender are as follows: Ha-geh-gih is *old man*, Ya-geh-gih, *old woman*; Ga-geh-gih, *old animal*. Geh-gih is the word for *old*, and Ha for *he*, Ya for *she*, and Ga for *it*. Thus literally, the translation would be, *old he, old she, old it*. Hoh-ni-gont means *wise*; Hoo-gweh means *man* (as an intellectual being) and *wise man* is Hoh-ni-gont hoo-gweh. Now notice the feminine prefix of both the adjective and noun required to change this to *wise woman*. We have given one prefix above, viz: *Ya*. *Wise woman* would be *Go-ni-gont ya-goo-gweh*.

In closing this chapter, which, if it were expedient, we would gladly extend, we give the Lord's Prayer in Seneca with a literal translation:—

Gwah-nih, ga-o-yah-geh chih dyoh. Da-ye-sa-ah-sao-nyook  
 Our Father, in heaven thou dwellest. Prayed to be thy  
 he-ni-sah-sa-nan-do-gah-dih. Ee-dweh niis ne-sai-wah-geh  
 holy name. Let come thine own  
 ne-dwa-noh-do-ohs-ah-gwen-ni-yuh; (one word) neh, kuh niis  
 kingdom; and thy  
 he-ni-di-sah-ni-go-oh-daah neh-huh ni-ya-wah ne-yo-an-jah-geh  
 will be done on earth  
 naeh he-ni-dyuh-daah ne-ga-o-yah-geh. Da-gyoh na-ga wa-  
 just as it is in heaven. give us this wa-  
 nis-ha-deh nah-de-wa-nis-ha-ge no-gwa-ah-gwah, neh kuh neh  
 day daily our bread and also  
 do-da-gwai-wah-sa-gwus no-gwai-wa-neh-ak-shah naeh niih  
 forgive us our sins as we  
 he-de-jak-hi-wah-sa-gwah-seh nok hi-wa-neh-a-gih. Sa-noh  
 forgive those that sin against us. Do  
 kuh ne-huh-ha-swah-ah ha-dyo-gwah-ni-go-da-goh; neh gwa  
 not lead us to where we shall be tempted; but  
 sho da-gwa-yah-doh-nook ha-yah-da-deh Haah-ni-go-ate-gah.  
 keep us away from the Evil-minded.  
 Iis sa-ah sa-wah ne-dwa-noh-do-ohs-ah-gwen-ni-yuh, neh kuh  
 Thou art the owner (of the) Kingdom and also  
 ne gah-has-des-hah, neh kuh ne de-ga-ah-sa-oh ha-yu-i-wa-da-  
 (of the) power, and also (of the) glory (to all) eternity.  
 dyieh. Do-gas neh-huh na-ya-wah.  
 Truly it will be done, (or, Amen. So be it.)

## CHAPTER XII.

### WHY INDIANS AND TOADS ARE FRIENDLY.

One time a tribe of Indians started out from the site of Geneseo to fight their enemies, and gather scalps and glory. On the way they crossed an animal's track, and, horrified, they asked their chief about it. He knew everything. He said, "This is the track of the biggest of bears. They have no hair upon them. They know as much as Indians, and, no matter if one is twenty miles away, if an Indian sees his track, he will know it, and turn back as fast as he can run. He can eat up a whole tribe and then he will growl for more. It is his track we have just crossed, and he knows it and is now on his way back. Something great is going to happen to us. You all camp here, and I will take the swiftest runner, and we will go to meet the bear." Having hung his crest of feathers on a stub, he said, "If that falls off you may know that we are dead." The two started, and, at length arriving at the running-together-place of two streams, they halted. Soon they heard a mighty thundering, as when Heno has cast a thunder-bolt. The bear was coming; it was his growling that echoed and re-echoed up and down the streams. The sound was terrible. It filled all the space between the mountains. The two Indians concealed themselves behind great trees. The bear rushed upon them. The Indians shot arrows at the bear, but he paid no heed, for nothing could penetrate his hide. The bear knew somebody was about, and this enraged him. He tore up the ground; he pawed the rocks that he might sharpen his claws. He bit an oak to put his teeth in order, and the splinters flew in every direction. The bear spied one of the Indians, and chased him round the tree. For hours they ran so close to each other, that the bear did not know whether he was chasing the Indian or the Indian, him; but the Indian knew. The Indian dared not shoot, for, a moment's hesitation



would have dropped him into the foaming, wide-open mouth of the panting giant-of-a-bear. Being a great jumper, the Indian sprang suddenly to one side, clearing one of the streams, and then the other. The bear pursued so close that the Indian could not shoot. The second Indian now ran up, and the bear fled after him, but the bear, being very large, began to get tired, and, attempting to jump the stream, he stumbled and fell upon his great knees, folding his paws under him. The first Indian shot an arrow, and it happened to stick in the soft pad of the bear's foot. This was a mortal wound, because the bear carried his heart in his paw. The bear found that he must die, and he roared louder than ever; so loud that the mountains shook and trembled. Then all was still.

When the Indians saw that the bear was dead, they hastened back to tell the people. The tribe was very glad of the news, and went on to see the monster. They covered the body with dry sticks, and fired the pile. The bear was reduced to ashes. Then the chief said, "His ashes are very poisonous. Take up a little of them and whatever you ask will be granted. If one should say, 'I wish to be a great hunter,' he would be; or a great runner, or jumper, it would come to him." So all the Indians wished. It happened that the chief had wished to be the fleetest of all runners. Soon they neared the village of the tribe they had come to fight and the chief saw that the villagers were dancing. The wigwams were empty. A great festival was being given. So earnest were they in their festivities that they did not notice the chief of their foes as he glided noiselessly among the revelers and fell to dancing with them. As he mingled in the dance, he stabbed one and another with his scalping-knife, throwing into the wound some of the ashes of the bear, and, the tribe noticed at length, that scores were dropping to the earth, and the people then, for the first time, observed their enemy, and gave him chase. They fought his own tribe, killing all but him. It was not rutable to kill a chief, and so they spared him. They held a council, and decided that they ought to punish him a little. They heated two round stones and compelled the chief to stand upon them, a foot on each. His feet were blistered.

They cut his blistered soles and filled the bagging skin with hot coals. "Now," said they, "*woman*, let us see you run. We bring our swiftest runner. We will also put a pole where you can see it, and this shall mark the end of the running-course." When both runners were near the pole, the burnt-footed man ran right on. They cried out to him, but he kept going. All the runners, goaded by the disgraceful defeat of their champion, started in pursuit, but the runner distanced them. When last they saw him he was running.

When the chief was beyond the reach of his enemies, he took a foot-path in the wood, and followed it till night, then he crawled into a hollow log and lay down in pain. Towards day-break he heard a voice at the foot of the log, saying, "You feel very bad?" He answered, "Yes, I do," "I know it." said the strange voice, "and I have come to see if I can help you." "All right," said the Indian, "I am glad of that, for I am very bad." The creature that had spoken left him medicine; but before he departed, he put some on the Indian's feet and cured them and drove away all pain, and then he said, "Always remember me. I came to help you because you often help my people." "Who are you?" asked the Indian. The voice replied, "I am he whom your people call the *toad*. You have often heard me crying in distress when the hungry snake has tried to swallow me, and you have beaten him off and now for this reason I have come and cured you. Great chief, remember me and my family when you get home. Do not forget us. Help us and we will help you. Tell your people to be our friends, and promise that you will be kind to all the family of toads." He faithfully made promise, and thus you learn why the toads and Indians are warmest friends.

These vagaries of the Senecas we have learned from their own lips, and have presented them to you in this book of "Indian Life and Legends," as far as possible, in their own words. O-yo-ga-weh makes no apologies but hopes the reader may lay down this little book with greater charity for the Indian, and better knowledge of his ways.

*Na-ho.*







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